

Town of Loxahatchee Groves
Town Council Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, October 9, 2018 - 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Town Hall, 155 F Road
Loxahatchee Groves, Florida 33470

Mayor David Browning (Seat 4) Vice Mayor Todd McLendon (Seat 2) Council Member Dave DeMarois (Seat 5) Council Member Joyce Batcheler (Seat 3) Council Member Phillis Maniglia (Seat 1)	Town Manager William F. Underwood, II Assistant Town Manager Francine Ramaglia Town Attorney Michal J. Cirullo, Jr.
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PUBLIC NOTICE/AGENDA

1. OPENING

a. Call to Order & Roll Call

Vice Mayor McLendon called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Upon roll call the following members were recorded as present: Vice Mayor McLendon, and Council Members Batcheler, DeMarois, and Maniglia. Also present were Town Manager Underwood, Attorney Jacob Horowitz, and Assistant Town Manager Francine Ramaglia.

b. Approval of Agenda

Motion: a motion was made by Council Member DeMarois, and seconded by Council Member Maniglia to approve the Agenda. Motion passed 4-0.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. Charter Referendum Relating to Increasing the term and Identifying the purpose of Indebtedness – Section 6 – Budget and Appropriation, (6) Revenue Bonds: Lease Purchase Contracts.

Council Member Maniglia stated that she would like to include not only the debt term, but discussion also on how debt would be paid either by the Town's Road Policy that requires a 50/50 payment plan with 50% paid by the residents, and 50% paid by the Town, or by some other alternative payment structure.

Council Member DeMarois stated that he feels that it's important to identify what will be done with the money spent.

Town Manager Underwood advised that the LOST monies were for a specific time period of 10 years. The 5-cent funding is only for road improvements, and must be renewed by the County Commission. The 6-cent is for road maintenance only. He advised that a bank will look at the Town, and apply the same standards they do to other borrowers, and look at its ability to pay back the amount borrowed.

Vice Mayor McLendon advised that the Bond will not be used for rock, or millings, and he would never vote to put in OGEM as an improvement to roads.

Robert Shorr, E Road, advised that only matter to discuss is the language on the ballot, and the language on charter change for police services. He inquired about the terms of the Bond, and the Town Manager advised that the term was for 30 years, and was approved by the Electors.

Mr. Shorr questioned why the Town could not finance the road improvements for the residents directly. He suggested that the Town consider a referendum question rather than a change to the Charter for the road improvements. Vice Mayor McLendon questioned if Mr. Shorr was recommending identifying which roads would be improved, and he was advised that he does not believe that dead end roads should not be included for improvements.

Attorney Horowitz advised that the Charter says what it says, and its states that the Town can use the section that allows for special projects, and it can be handled like the Bond issue was done for a specific project.

Council Member Maniglia stated that in the last referendum vote, the Charter language was included and the only change it addressed was the term of the loan.

Mary McNicolas, Raymond Drive, read a letter from Marianne Miles into the record relative to the North B Road project to include the roads that have been through process for improvement. The letter also suggested that a reduction in the maintenance for those parcels paying for improvements.

Connie Bell, 22nd Road North, advised that her improvement process had also been completed that includes 22nd Road, Paradise, and Flamingo. The base to these roads had been brought up, but no drainage has been done on these roads, especially Paradise and Flamingo. She also stated that she would like the improvement to be OGEM, and also advised that no request for drainage has been requested as it would be included in the road improvements for the three roads. However, she advised if no improvements were going to be made then residents of the three roads would request that the Town include their roads for drainage.

Council Member Maniglia again questioned the slow process of the drainage project, and questioned the RFP process again. She was advised that main delay is obtaining the necessary easements from the residents for the placement of drainage.

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Upon question about the costs for road improvements to be paid by the entire community, Town Manager Underwood advised a General Obligation Bond would be requested to be voted by the registered voters of the Town.

Ron Jarriel, 161st Terrace North, asked about charter referendum for both police services (PBSO) and roads. He further feels that the contractor is not slow, and we are doing catch basins. He also stated that he does not want the language to include specific roads, and would prefer to include D and E Roads for improvements. He also advised that the Town does not need to change charter to create its own Police Department.

John Ryan, 3508 A Road, advised that previously 60% voted down the most recent road referendum and feels that people do not understand the cost sharing policy as adopted by the Town. Attorney Horowitz advised that the referendum can only contain a total of 75 words, and suggested that Town Council work with the Town Manager on education to the public prior to the election. Council Member Maniglia agreed that communication is a big problem.

Joannie Hopkins advised that she supports a Referendum question for specific roads rather than a charter change, and should include that residents residing on the improved roads would be paying back the loan.

Council Member DeMarois questioned if the Town could just identify that the funds borrowed would be road improvements only.

Council Member Batcheler advised that would like to change the term of the loan for up to 11 years.

Frank Schiola, Marcella, advised that the language in the Agenda does not explain what is being done. He also explained how the District did the road improvements previously.

Council Member Maniglia suggested that we may need to include specific roads in the language.

Mark Jackson, D Road, advised that previous referendum failed because taxes are so high, the roads are not maintained with rock, and material used does not provide a base. He finally advised that the District budget has now increased to \$14 million.

Geoff Sluggett, Raymond Drive, advised that maintaining roads year after year is just throwing money away, and feels that a conspiracy theory was spread about what the Town was going to spend the money on prior to the last referendum election. He also stated that with improvements, maintenance costs will go down. Keep the ballot language just to roads, and do an informational campaign.

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Council Member Maniglia discussed communication with the public and the Town should include this in the annual budget.

Cassie, North B Road, would like to not change Charter, but rather a referendum ballot question. Feels it is the responsibility of the Town to improve roads, and believes the process is flawed.

Patrick Painter – 12887 Raymond Drive, advised that he has lived here for 34 years, and that no vision is in place. Feels that the rural roads should be improved, but the Town needs a vision and good ideas. Council Member Maniglia questioned what to do with those OGEM roads.

Mary McNicholas, Raymond Drive, advised that the language of the last ballot question was difficult to understand, and that the right language and time frame has to be changed.

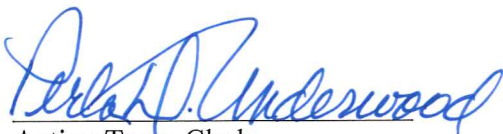
Robert Shorr – E Road, advised that the failure of OGEM is because of lack of drainage. Easements footage requirements should be reduced so folks will give the easement, and feels that the Referendum should reference the Road Policy.

Connie Bell, 22nd Road North, received the estimate at time of petition, but feels that 22nd Road is a Town road that should not be paid by the residents of her project.

Following discussion by the Town Council relative to different options for how to move forward on the Referendum, Council Member Maniglia feels that Sluggett will be going after grants to help improve roads, but Council Member DeMarois advised that there is no free money.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM.


Acting Town Clerk


Todd McLendon, Mayor *Vice*