

***New Smyrna Beach Special City Commission Meeting
July 24, 2018***

1. The City Commission unanimously agreed to set a total millage rate of 4.1755 for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Commissioners also scheduled public hearings to formally approve that rate and a total city budget of \$51.1 million, including a proposed \$26.9 million general fund.

Public hearings and ordinance readings to officially adopt the 2018-2019 millage rate and budget are tentatively set for Sept. 11 and Sept. 25. Both meetings will be at 5:05 p.m. at City Hall. The new budget will take effect Oct. 1.

Funding for the 2018-2019 budget includes a proposed operating millage rate of 3.8416, which represents a 4.4 percent increase above the current millage of 3.6811, and a 12.3 percent increase over the city's rolled-back rate of 3.4211. According to Florida's "Truth In Millage" (TRIM) rule, the rolled-back rate is the millage rate that would generate the same amount of revenue as the previous year's rate, using new property tax assessments of the same land areas.

The proposed debt service millage rate, which pays down city debt, would be .3339. That is an 11 percent decrease from the prior year's budget. The combined operating and debt service millage rates bring the total proposed millage rate for New Smyrna Beach residents to 4.1755. Officials said that's the second lowest millage rate among the 17 cities in Volusia County. Staff members estimate the new operating millage rate would cost property owners an additional \$14 in annual property taxes, based on an average residential taxable value of \$174,000.

Officials calculated New Smyrna Beach will receive 7.4 percent more in taxable value revenue over the previous (2017-2018) year's receipts, due to new construction, annexations and increases in taxable property value. Commissioner Jake Sachs asked City Manager Pam Brangaccio what would happen if there was no increase in the city's millage rate. She replied that city staff members/personnel would have to be cut.

Major increases proposed for the 2018-2019 general fund budget total about \$2.01 million and include:

- \$369,182 for an employee cost-of-living wage increase (still in negotiations with two unions).
- \$235,000 to pay for three new Fire Department positions.
- \$309,000 for a market adjustment to Police Officer wages to help New Smyrna retain and recruit officers.
- \$37,914 to reclassify two part-time positions to full-time employees (the Assistant City Attorney and Solid Waste Compliance Officer).
- \$1,067,659 that will go toward replacing capital equipment and small capital improvements.

2. City Commissioners unanimously authorized their City Attorney to prepare an ordinance establishing a general obligation bond issue to buy land along Turnbull Creek to preserve and protect it from development. The bond issue to purchase those lands would go before voters on the November general election ballot.

It is estimated the bond issue would cost property owners an additional \$74 in yearly property taxes, based on an average residential taxable value of \$174,000.

In June, City Commissioners agreed to work with the Trust For Public Lands to examine the potential for voters to approve a general obligation bond raising money for the Turnbull Creek land purchases. The Trust is a national nonprofit organization that works with local governments to create parks and help them pass voter-approved bonds to buy environmentally sensitive land threatened with future development. Trust For Public Land representatives will assist the City with drafting language for the November ballot question. The ordinance officially approving the bond question for the fall election is expected to come before the Commission at its Aug. 14 regular meeting. Much of the property in the Turnbull Creek watershed is both environmentally and historically important. Turnbull Creek is part of an extensive canal system created by colonists of the New Smyrna Colony, founded in 1768 by Scottish physician Dr. Andrew Turnbull. The canal system is on the National Register for Historic Places.

The long-term goal of the land acquisition is to create an environmental preservation "corridor" that ties in with a city park and trail system.

3. The City Commission voted 5-0 to pass an ordinance requiring Commission candidates to file their campaign treasurer reports electronically with the Volusia County Supervisor of Elections Office.

The county's electronic filing system allows the public to view each candidate's campaign contributions online.

4. City Commissioners unanimously passed a resolution rescheduling their Aug. 28 meeting due to the primary election that day.

The new meeting time will be Wednesday, Aug. 29 at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall.

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