

City Commission Budget Workshop

August 6, 2025

Video and agenda packet can be found [here](#).

The PowerPoint presentation can be found in the agenda packet or [here](#).

Mayor Cleveland, Vice Mayor Martin and Commissioners Perrine and McGuirk were present. Commissioner Ashley had an excused absence.

Public Participation:

- A representative of Detwiler pickleball group spoke about the deteriorating conditions at the Detwiler Park tennis/pickleball courts. He asked that the Commission budget for repairs in the next budget cycle.
- A representative of the NSB Firefighters' union spoke about the disparity in pay between NSB and other local municipalities. He stated that 32% of the firefighters are actively seeking employment in other towns because of this.

Summary of Workshop:

City Manager, Kevin Cowper, stated that the focus of the meeting had changed since the workshop on July 10. He reiterated that the proposed budget aligns with the city's strategic priorities. Finance Director Jo-Anne Drury's presentation highlighted the changes in revenue and expenditures (1) between the FY 25 budget and the amended/actual FY 25 budget, and (2) between the amended/actual FY 25 budget and the proposed FY 26 budget.

At a special meeting on July 22, the Commission set the maximum operating millage rate at 4.6370 mills; set the maximum debt millage rate for the Turnbull Creek land acquisition bond at 0.1115 mills; and authorized the stormwater non ad valorem assessment rate to be advertised on the TRIM notice at \$125 per EDU (equivalent dwelling unit).

Proposal Highlights:

- Estimated taxable property values for FY26 are \$7,536,528,096, an increase of \$514,022,457 from FY25. 84% of the value is residential and 11% in commercial.
- Reserves are formally included in the budget for the first time as a new revenue line.
- NSB has 4th lowest mill rate in Volusia County.
- Stormwater rates are slightly above median for the county.
- Marina dockage rates will be increased to better align with neighboring marinas. There is very strong demand for dockage.
- There are 7 new positions in the budget: 6 in public works and 1 in capital projects.
- The proposed FY26 budget of \$199,507,822 is 2% lower than the amended FY25 budget. (Note: The City Commission amended the FY25 budget from \$136,917,060 to \$203,325,181. The change reflected accounting changes to provide a more accurate and transparent picture. (The changes are detailed in the PowerPoint.)
- 59% of the FY26 general fund operating revenues are from property tax; 23% from other taxes.
- 50% of the FY26 general fund operating expenses are for public safety; 20% for general government functions; 14% for parks and leisure services.

Future Considerations:

- Institute a charge to fund fire services. The charge would be based on benefit to property, not value. A Fire Assessment Study would be conducted in the Fall with a potential resolution to adopt by January 10, 2026.
- The solid waste services contract expires in September 2026. The city will be renegotiating or issuing an RFP in Fall 2025. Costs are expected to increase. Now is the time to evaluate service levels.
- A study is planned to evaluate golf course operations and infrastructure to identify long term best use of the property.
- Use “pay-as-you-go” funding for recurring capital needs to maintain consistent annual funding levels and avoid incurring debt for routine maintenance and operation.

Discussion and Comments:

- Commissioners were surprised by the firefighter’s comments regarding low pay. Mr. Cowper stated that the city is nearing the end of a three-year contract. Neighboring municipalities have increased firefighter pay recently. The current pay plan study results will be available soon. This pay disparity was considered in the proposed budget.
- Mayor Cleveland asked whether the breakdown of general fund expenses by function was typical and appropriate for a town our size. Mr. Cowper said it is typical, and he believes it reflects the values of our community, i.e., a focus on public safety and the importance of leisure services.
- The Commissioners thanked the staff for an excellent job on preparing and presenting the budget. They expressed appreciation for the collaboration between finance staff and department heads. The mayor noted that the budget is now fully transparent.

Next steps:

- First public hearing – September 10, 2025 at 5:30
- Second public hearing – September 23, 2025 at 6:30
- Fiscal year begins – October 1, 2025