

CITY COUNCIL MEETING FINAL BUDGET HEARING

SEPTEMBER 20, 2011

Mayor Joe LaCascia called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Joe LaCascia.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Joe LaCascia, Vice Mayor Trudy Block, Councilor Nancy Adorno, Councilor Mike Blethen and Interim City Manager/City Clerk Jackson.
Absent: Councilor Don Kimsey and Attorney Tom Cloud (not required to be present)

A quorum was established.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Pursuant to Florida Statute Ordinances must be read in full

ORDINANCE 2011-1283, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF POLK CITY OF POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL LEVYING OF AD VALOREM TAXES FOR THE CITY OF POLK CITY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012 AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE, second an final reading

Mayor LaCascia read Ordinance 2011-1283 in short title and Interim City Manager/City Clerk Jackson read Ordinance 2011-1283 in its entirety.

Mayor LaCascia noted the millage rate is the same as the current fiscal year. Mayor LaCascia opened the Public Hearing; there being no comments or questions from the audience Mayor LaCascia closed the Public Hearing.

Vice Mayor Block made a motion to accept Ordinance 2011-123 in its entirety; the motion was seconded by Councilor Blethen.

Roll Call: Councilor Blethen-aye, Councilor Adorno-aye, Vice Mayor Block-aye, Mayor LaCascia-aye

4-eyes

0-nays

The motion carried to accept Ordinance 2011-1283 in its entirety.

ORDINANCE 2011-1284, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF POLK CITY OF POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011-2012; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE, second and final reading

Mayor LaCascia read Ordinance 2011-1284 in short title and Interim City Manager/City Clerk Jackson read Ordinance 2011-1284 in its entirety.

Mayor LaCascia gave a brief explanation of the FY 2012 Budget and opened the Public Hearing; there being no comments or questions from the audience Mayor LaCascia Closed the Public Hearing.

Under discussion Councilor Blethen advised he was not happy with the budget; he doesn't see any benefits to the people, and he is concerned where we are at going forward. Mayor LaCascia commented there are three things to look at with the budget and to consider: the citizens, the staff and the bond holders; those three things of interest and concern was considered and Council agreed to move forward. There are no new taxes imposed. Councilor Adorno agrees with Councilor Blethen; we have an opportunity for improvement with this budget. This budget is not the best, but it is not the worst; it needs to be "tweaked" and re-evaluated in areas, i.e. 1) how we evaluate salaries and wages – should they be increased or continue at current level; this has to be looked over and re-determined more than just among those that are here – it needs to be more fair in all areas. Councilor Adorno commented she is not really happy, but at this point what we can do is look forward when developing next year's budget and make changes. Councilor Blethen commented about spending money; we need to wait until the economic picture looks better. Councilor Adorno commented everything is not based on money, but providing services that are satisfactory; we need to look at other areas and provide other services; she looks forward to seeing how we can do that. Councilor Adorno briefly discussed historic districts and what the possibilities may be. Vice Mayor Block commented that two years before the City was in a crisis – we paid as we went; this budget is stabilization and we can't make a lot of drastic changes. Vice Mayor Block mentioned the bond issues, money for streets and roads, the Library had 1,700 people last month – look at money for the Library, while attending the Florida League of Cities meeting there were several ideas that we can do to provide some services for the citizens and start looking at Code Enforcement. Vice Mayor Block feels this is the best we can do right now. City Council is responsible for the salaries of the City Manager and City Clerk; the City Manager is responsible for the other employees and she prefers to leave that to the City Manager. Councilor Adorno commented what she was referring to was the old system and re-evaluating how it is done; Vice Mayor Block agreed if the City can afford it. Vice Mayor Block gave recognition to staff for reducing the City's cost of health insurance and shifting more costs on the employee; the salary increases are self-paying – employees are willing to give up some things in order to get

salary increases; she doesn't have a problem with the healthcare and salaries. Mayor LaCascia commented salaries should be left to the City Manager; it has been made clear in the matter of preference by City Council, but the Ordinance says City Council appropriates the budget, and the disposition is left to the City Manager. Mayor LaCascia feels Council dealing with employees' salaries comes close to interfering; it currently falls on the shoulders of the Interim City Manager to follow the mandates of City Council

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Patricia R. Jackson, City Clerk

Joe LaCascia, Mayor