

Town of Melbourne Beach

SPECIAL TOWN COMMISSION MEETING

August 19, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

COMMUNITY CENTER – 509 OCEAN AVENUE

MINUTES

Commission Members:

Mayor Alison Dennington
Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow
Commissioner Robert Baldwin
Commissioner Anna Butler
Commissioner Tim Reed

Staff Members:

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Town Attorney Ryan Knight
Town Clerk Amber Brown

1. Call to Order

Mayor Alison Dennington called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Town Clerk Amber Brown conducted roll call

Commission Members Present

Mayor Alison Dennington
Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow
Commissioner Robert Baldwin
Commissioner Anna Butler
Commissioner Tim Reed

Staff Members Present

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Town Attorney Ryan Knight
Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr
Police Chief Tim Zander
Town Clerk Amber Brown

3. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Mayor Alison Dennington led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public Comments

After being acknowledged by the Mayor, members of the public should state their name and address for the record. The Commission encourages citizens to prepare their comments in advance. Each individual will have three (3) minutes to address the Commission on any topic(s) related to Town business, not on the Agenda.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about walk-on pages that have been updated, including page 7a, the Brevard County Police Officer Starting Pay Survey & 2025 Raises, FY25 Salary Comparison-Current Year, FY26 Comparative Proposed City Millage Rates. - 4:10

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about 2 documents she provided, including data on Melbourne Beach Commercial Office/Retail and Indian Lantic Commercial Office/Retail.

Jan Pence – 200 Riverside Drive – Asked if the Mayor could pronounce the Town Manager's name correctly.

Suzie Stark – 307 Fifth Ave – Spoke about watching respectful communication decline, comparing it to a reality TV way of communicating. Spoke about how emails/texts/social media posts can also diminish effective communication. Let's all strive to do better.

5. Public Hearings/Special Orders

A. Voting on items within the FY 2025-2025 budget

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about there should be a vote on the items that are currently intact. - 14:48

Commissioner Tim Reed volunteered to lead. Spoke about page 11, which is the General Fund 001 Department 11 Legislative Expenses. Proposed cutting executive salaries for the Town Commission to \$15,000, with each seat getting \$3,000.

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that we reduce Executive Salaries to a total sum of \$15,000 in the FY26 budget, and that would be assigned at \$3,000 for each of the 5 seats;

Town Attorney Ryan Knight said it would require an ordinance to change the code.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Town Attorney Ryan Knight reiterated that it would require an ordinance, and a first and second reading. Confirmed it should only take an hour and a half to do, so the legal fees would not be higher than the savings.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow suggested doing the ordinance as a walk-on at the next RTCM.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about the 3% COLA. CPI for this region is 2.3%. - 20:35

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that we call this the CPI + employee appreciation and retention increase so that's comprised of the CPI number as it's reported currently at 2.3% + the .7;

Commissioner Robert Baldwin verified they would not be trying to change the amount, just change the way it is titled in the budget.

Mayor Alison Dennington said at the DOGE discussion at Florida League of Cities, the DOGE official addressed COLA raises, anything above the COLA amount is performance based that they would need data for.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded;

Marivi Walker – 511 Riverside – Spoke about not having an issue with the semantics, but CPI changes on a regular basis in December it was 2.9%, and July was 2.7%. What is the cut off date? - 28:12

Commissioner Tim Reed said he was citing the US Bureau of Labor Statistics Southeast Information Office that was published last week as of July of this year.

Lauren Hardman - 320 Sixth Ave – Spoke about how Robert's Rules of Order is already not being followed. There was a motion then questions, then discussion before the motion was seconded. Asked that they stay with Robert's Rules of Order protocol.

Bruce Larson – 1507 Pine St – Spoke about how the issue is justification. There are 3 different numbers that can justify the increase, any of them are fine, but pick one. CPI, trailing 12 months, core projection, or social security.

Motion carried 3-2 with Mayor Alison Dennington and Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow dissenting.

Mayor Alison Dennington said she was opposed to any increases at this time without getting information they were supposed to get last month, which is the performance evaluations.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow voted against it because there was no definition to the timetable with which the index was referenced.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about how the next item is a salary increase greater than 3%, listing the positions this would apply to which includes Police Chief, Fire Chief, Town Clerk, Groundskeeper, Maintenance Worker and Police Admin. Spoke about the Police Chief and how he is up for a 15% increase in annual salary. - 34:44

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion opposing the 15% increase; Mayor Alison Dennington seconded;

Doug Hilmes – 443 Riverview Ln – Spoke about a 15% increase seems excessive for anyone. Is shocked by a 20% increase to the budget. Said the performance reviews should be released to the Commission and is against any increases until that information is provided.

Bruce Larson – 1507 Pine – Spoke about how there needs to be justification. If there is a performance metric justifying the increase then that is okay, but without justification, how would you know?

Steve Walters – 416 Sixth Ave – Spoke about how the Police Chief is doing a good job, but he has never heard of giving different employees a higher raise.

Frank LaGrassa – 412 First Ave – Spoke about agreeing with what everyone else has said.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin verified this was a vote against the 15% increase, but does not include a different amount.

Commissioner Anna Butler spoke about being uncomfortable without having any metrics.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how this is not the end of the budget. This could be revised when the data is provided.

Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin said it would be helpful if the Town Manager prepared a justification for these particular individuals, keeping in mind the general consensus of the Commission is that 15% is high.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said she can, but the Commission could also come up with their own number.

Town Attorney Ryan Knight said the Commissioners have access to the employee evaluations on the DOGE portal.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked for the employee evaluations to be printed specifically for the positions applicable to that 15% suggested pay increase.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow made a motion that we table the merit increase discussion until the next budget discussion, pursuant to us reviewing the merit increase justifications and performance reviews; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded;

Doug Hilmes – 443 Riverview – Spoke about also looking at comparable salaries in the area.

Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about how the next item is the salary increases for employees employed less than 1 year. This includes the Building Official, Admin Assistant, Deputy Clerk and Code Enforcement Officer. - 48:22

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that the 4 employees that have been here less than a years time should not be receiving the 3% increase; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded;

Commissioner Robert Baldwin asked if the 3% increase would go into effect on their year anniversary, otherwise they will be employed for 18 months without a raise.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about doing the merit increase on the date of hire, or the date of reposition. Does not think the positions should be penalized for the date of hire. Should be by anniversary date or reposition date.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how the new Manager could review it and come to the Commission to correct it. Stay on the budget cycle.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about not being opposed to having a mid year for employees that come in the middle of the year.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin asked about the standard practice, if someone has been here 6 months, has the increase applied to them. Asked about giving an employee a portion of the increase if they have been here less time.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr spoke about how it has been done on the fiscal year. When an employee starts in June the raise starts in October. Said she could give employees a portion of the increase, it is whatever the Commission decides.

Mayor Alison Dennington said turnover is high and that it should be tied to the fiscal year.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said taking into account a pro rata situation makes sense and is reasonable.

Motion carried 4-1 with Commissioner Robert Baldwin dissenting.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow made a motion that for those employees that have been here for less than 1 year, that we pro rata the intended 3% combined CPI and merit increase to their date of hire or adjusted placement in new position to the fiscal year starting 10/1;

Mayor Alison Dennington asked if this would be general or only employees that are currently employed.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said she would make it general and it applies to anyone that meets the qualification.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin asked if the Vice Mayor would consider using 10/1 as an effective date, and she added that to the motion.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow amended the motion to

Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded;

Marivi Walker – 511 Riverside – Spoke about how COLA is COLA, why would that be cut out? Said she would understand not giving merit increases if someone has not been there long but does not understand not giving someone cost of living adjustments. - 1:01:12

Bruce Larson – 1507 Pine – Spoke about how the COLA and merit should be separated. Recommends prorating the COLA.

Mayor Alison Dennington brought up that there is no 6 months requirement. Also, pro rata of the 3% or 2.3% to which the Vice Mayor said she would make a revision.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow made a motion for the employees that have been here for less than a year either placed in a new position and have been here in existence and got a payroll increase for that new job or have been hired as a new employee to the Town, that they get their COLA as stated on 10/1 at the 6 month mark after their date of hire;

Mayor Alison Dennington asked if the COLA was tied to the 2.3% that they had discussed.

Town Attorney Ryan Knight said that it should be based on the same thing as the other employees.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked if it is 10/1 or 6 months from their hire date.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow revised the motion to 2.3% COLA at the 6th month mark after their placement into their position or date of hire, which means it is not pro rata; Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded; Motion carried 4-1 with Mayor Alison Dennington dissenting.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about not understanding the motion and how people should be here for a year before getting a change in salary.

Commissioner Tim Reed said the next item is the police accreditation, which would be \$18,000 in the FY26 budget. - 1:09:45

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that he is opposed to the \$18,000 for police accreditation in the 2026 budget; Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded;

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about there being four items on the list related to the police budget and asked to discuss them at the same time.

Mayor Alison Dennington and Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about how they would prefer to talk about them individually.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about the Police Department items total \$60,000. Is the plan to reduce the budget by \$60,000, or to allow the department to determine the priorities of how to reduce their budget?

Commissioner Tim Reed said in the early budget negotiations, the Police Chief was asked if there was anything he would consider passing on and it was none of these items.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how there was not a consensus on these items in previous meetings. For accreditation and mental health, there are free options.

Commissioner Anna Butler asked if the Police Chief could provide input on priorities.

Police Chief Tim Zander spoke about how he previously said if he had to cut something it would be the car. He previously ranked his priorities and his #1 is stipends, the 2nd is mental health, and the 3rd is accreditation.

Motion carried 3-2 with Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow and Commissioner Anna Butler dissenting.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about the police mental health item at \$10,000 in this year's budget. Says he understands what the Police Chief is seeking for his staff. Said he would like to see a solution that encompasses all first responders including the firefighters. -1:17:22

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that we do not do this \$10,000 in this budget year;

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how there is an opioid settlement that provides 4 free hours of mental health wellness for police officers and firefighters.

Police Chief Tim Zander spoke about how he is looking for a local immediate response when something critical happens.

Mayor Alison Dennington seconded;

Lauren Hardman – 320 Sixth Ave – Spoke about how she is not able to handle the Commission not following Robert’s Rules of Order. You could take hours off meetings.

Marivi Walker – 511 Riverside Dr – Asked the Commission to please not remove this from the budget. When people don’t have this, bad things can happen.

Walters Hardman – 320 Sixth Ave – Spoke about it being easy to cut this, but have you ever been in a traumatic situation? Don’t take this out. That is why people take their lives.

Bruce Larson – 1507 Pine St – Spoke about how early in the budget cycle this item was justified. This is not something to be played with. This is people protecting our community. When bad things happen, people take their lives. The need exists.

Bruce Pickett – 1501 Oak – If you take this off, you just told us how much you value first responders.

Dan Brunger – 400 Sixth Ave – Spoke about how people need to be vetted. If they cannot handle it, they shouldn’t be first responders.

Frank LaGrassa – 412 First Ave – Spoke about not knowing anyone who needed this when he was a first responder. Seen it used for a fraudulent PTSD claim for disability.

Dan Maloney – 1407 Pine St – As a 12-year first responder, he supports Chief Zander’s request for this. Please give it serious consideration.

Commissioner Anna Butler spoke about this being a niche during a crisis. Culture has changed, and people are more willing to talk about it. It is our responsibility to say these people are worth more than \$10,000. Fully supportive of this. - 1:30:06

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how our health insurance provides this. Said that if an issue arises, they could potentially pull in grief counselors.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about supporting this.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about wanting a solution that covers all first responders.

Commissioner Tim Reed withdrew his motion.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin made a motion that we approve the mental health program for the Police Department at the amount of roughly \$10,000; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded;

Bruce Larson – 1507 Pine St – Spoke about having the Town Manager explore this for the firefighters.

Lauren Hardman – 320 Sixth Ave – Spoke about being a first responder for 20 years and how she has seen drownings. From time to time, she has needed help, but that does not make her weak or unable to do the job. Spoke about how firefighters need this, and if it were covered under employee insurance, that would not include volunteer firefighters.

Motion carried 4-1 with Mayor Alison Dennington dissenting.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow made a motion that we explore what the cost would be to cover our employees as well as our volunteer firefighters so that we can evaluate that accordingly; Commissioner Tim Reed seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Police Chief Tim Zander said he already has the cost; he can write something up and discuss it with the Fire Chief.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about how the next item is police stipends totaling \$11,520. One for the Field Training Officer, one for the Detective, and one for the night shift differential. - 1:39:10

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion to approve all 3 of the stipends; Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded;

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how her vote is dependent on the vote for the Fire Department and what money is being spent there.

Motion carried 4-1 with Mayor Alison Dennington dissenting.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about voting against it because it is dependent on the Fire Department vote.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about the next item, long-term capital allocation for a police vehicle.

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion to approve the allocation for the long-term capital for the police vehicle;

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said there are two items: one is long-term capital and one is short-term capital. The long-term capital is the \$30,000, which is the one being voted on. The short-term capital is \$50,000 for the purchase of a vehicle in this fiscal year, which is already in the budget.

Commissioner Anna Butler seconded;

Commissioner Robert Baldwin asked how often a police vehicle needs to be purchased.

Police Chief Tim Zander spoke about how it depends, but typically, it is every other year.

Motion carried 4-1 with Mayor Alison Dennington dissenting.

Commissioner Tim Reed confirmed there is no update on the status of the grant decision. This decision is based on not currently having that money. - 1:47:56

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how the budget is assuming that we get the SAFER grant. The Town's portion would be \$148,013.25. Of that, projected revenue \$125,000 from the sale of 2 fire department vehicles, and \$23,100 from long-term capital. If trucks are not sold right away, the contingency is increased \$60,000. If the SAFER grant is denied, the Town would have to decide how to move forward.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin confirmed that this number for the Town's portion is if all 6 employees are hired right away, so it is a worst-case scenario.

Commissioner Tim Reed said we don't have that money yet. We are basing the budget on getting that money. Asked if we want to vote on adding the 6 employees, are we saying we are adding the 6 employees, whether we get the grant or not?

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how the Commission can have plan A and plan B. Said she cannot add things in after the budget is passed.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about the Commission could vote for the firefighters contingent on getting the grant.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how the Commission could say that if we don't get the grant, we will take or borrow it from reserves.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about how we could vote on the 6 firefighters, predicated on the grant.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin made a motion that we move forward with the hiring of 6 full-time firefighters as presented in the budget, contingent on winning the SAFER grant; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded;

Susan Stark – 307 Fifth Ave – Spoke about appreciating the consideration of providing enhanced fire protection to the Town. Spoke about grants and how one downfall for the Town is that our neighboring municipality, Indialantic, is the same size with double the budget. Not having the safety net of Indialantic is detrimental to our residents. - 1:57:35

Bruce Pickett – 1501 Oak – Spoke about Brevard County transports. Melbourne Beach can run medical calls. Right now, we do not because we do not have people in the Station 24/7/365. We would not be able to transport, but would have someone who is medically trained for the immediate response, so a person would still be viable when they get to the hospital. Spoke about how CPR and an AED saved his wife's life. Roughly 90% of fire department responses are EMS calls. How many medical calls do we get? Having people at the station 24/7 is a huge benefit.

Bruce Larson – 1507 Pine St – Spoke about how there has not been enough justification for this to show that this is a crisis issue now. Need multiple years of data. The only data set you have now is from after the auto aid agreement was gone. You have to plan and budget for the worst-case scenario(not getting the grant). Indialantic is not the same as us.

Doug Hilmes – 443 Riverview Ln - Spoke about how there needs to be more information. Grants do not last forever, so what do we do after that? The budget this year is \$5.5 million. This is a 20% increase over last year. In 8 years, our budget has almost doubled. The county has been bringing down its taxes and budget, but the Town has been increasing. Our taxes are out of control. As far as the Fire Department goes, this should go to the residents to vote. The Commission needs to not increase the budget. Have a 2-3 year plan to decrease the budget.

Frank LaGrassa – 412 First Ave – Spoke about how hiring paid firefighters will have a fiscal impact forever. Believes it should be decided by referendum. As a stopgap, the Town should consider a stipend increase to the volunteer firefighters. They put a lot of time in, and training. Believes if they put in a serious effort, the Town can get the volunteers.

Jan Pickett – 1501 Oak – Spoke about being in training to become a firefighter. Young people do not volunteer like they used to. Last October, we started the firefighter class. Started with 12 and we are down to 6, 4 of which live in this Town. Spoke about how the stipend is nominal, and not the reason people volunteer.

Jennifer Ottomanelli - 510 Avenue A – Spoke about an incident of a shark bite with an arterial bleed, and they waited 22 minutes for paramedics to arrive. Everyone should take the time to listen to the Fire Chief as to why. There are not enough volunteers. If you think the volunteers are the only way to proceed, then I encourage you to volunteer. If we are talking about the needs of the Fire Department, there is no one better to get the info from than the Fire Chief. It is dangerous for citizens to stand up here and say what they think is best. If it goes to a referendum, people will only see their taxes going up, not the issue.

Walter Hardman – 320 Sixth Ave – Spoke about being a volunteer firefighter for 26 years, and a resident for over 40 years. The comment another resident made, any union organizer would have been able to do this, does not sit well with him. He was at the Station when a medical came in that needed an ambulance, and the only one available came from West Melbourne and took 42 minutes to get here. Said he turns 72 on Monday, and he is a volunteer. He does it to help people out. The Chief does a dang good job. If you think you can do better, put on the bunker gear and make it better. - 2:18:14

Steve Walters – 416 Sixth Ave – Spoke about putting the cart before the horse. What if you don't get the grant? The police department has 13 officers who will be there first. Residents need to vote on it. This is going to be a huge expense no matter what. About the reserve fund, it is there for one reason and one reason only: to recover from a hurricane.

Marivi Walker – 511 Riverside Dr – Spoke about having a signed petition to maintain and retain our fully staffed fire department. If the fire department is gone, we will lose control.

Lauren Hardman – 320 Sixth Ave – Spoke about it not being the first time this issue has been brought to the Commission. The Fire Department has saved the Town so much money. The department works tirelessly to get grants. Money over the past 10 years that was not spent was given to another department to cover their budget. Everything has been affected since COVID, including price increases and a lack of volunteers.

Katie Cox – 1401 Atlantic St – Spoke about how it's not only that people don't want to volunteer, but it is also that they cannot afford to live here. Most residents don't care enough/have enough time to sit and listen to all of this. The Commission is elected to make these decisions. If everything that the department does goes away, that includes things like the Santa Run, which people will care about.

Gail Gowdy – 215 Ash Ave – Spoke about being here a long time, and has not had a fire, but has had medical issues in her house. This is the first time she has heard about medical response. Our police are the first ones in the door. Supports people hearing the facts, and they have not been presented. Why is this an issue now? Residents need to vote on it.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about how they started having Fire Workshops in January. There has been ample opportunity to educate yourself. We have to weigh moving forward and doing something. People say it is not reversible, but Florida is an at-will state. This does not lock us in for centuries to come. We could change to the County or Indialantic. This is a very responsible approach. This has a very limited tax increase for the first few years. During that time, it would allow us to see how things go. This would be gambling with people's lives. - 2:35:50

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that Commissioner Baldwin can continue with his comment here for another 3 minutes; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about how he has received a lot of emails from both sides. In speaking with residents who were against it and wanted a referendum, pretty much everyone said verbatim that they understood why, and said they got their information from Nextdoor.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said as a Commissioner, public safety is a top priority. This, along with infrastructure, forms the backbone of the community and deserves our full attention and careful consideration. This was brought up 6 years ago. The Town Charter does not require it to go to a referendum, and the Charter Review Committee met this year and did not recommend adding it. Said in her opinion, the options are adopting a hybrid model or continuing with the County. This decision is vital to the future of this community.

Commissioner Anna Butler spoke about how things are going to change, period. What is going on with the volunteers is not sustainable. This is a huge weight on the department. We are flipping a coin to say that everything is going to be okay today. We can reverse it if we hire firefighters. It is not reversible if we go with the County, and we will not have a vote then. It is too late to do a referendum.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about understanding the points that the agreement with Indialantic ended, and volunteerism has declined. The decision that the Commission has

here is a one-year decision. Said he is opposed to touching the reserve fund in any manner related to this, and would really like a Commission seated that is going to be here during the implementation. The grant would be a remarkable thing, but we are making a decision based on an if. If the heart is making this decision, it would be regardless of the grant. The numbers can be pushed around. This is a finite thing that will last 3 years. We would be remiss if we did not have a plan going forward for how this is paid for. Was one of the first proponents of doing a referendum. The thinking behind the need for it is to have the community understand what is involved and support this change.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin made a motion to add 3 minutes to his time; Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about how Chief Brown has been holding public forums to get the information out there. This would change the nature of the department. The part that is troubling him is making a vote with an aspect that we do not have to ensure we can do this moving forward.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how Indialantic has a lot more commercial and larger structures. Spoke about Chief Brown altering 38 of 50 response time entries, and how he was considering leaving after he hits 20 years with the department if it does not become a paid department. We are being pushed into this. The SAFER grant has been around for 5 years. Does not dispute that it might need to be a paid Fire Department. It needs to go to a referendum. We need to get the information to the residents. Need to be fiscally responsible, or the State is going to take it away from us. Let's look at the data over the years. Said they could save about 3 minutes per call by spending about \$14,000 to do dispatch through Brevard County. This needs to go to a referendum next year. - 2:50:08

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about how there is going to be a new Commission at the end of this year, and he would like to have the people around who are going to see this through. Understands the need for it and is willing to work this out for the next fiscal year.

Commissioner Anna Butler spoke about how it is unconscionable to speak about the Fire Chief this way. People need to be careful when they are disparaging.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow said the Commission has sat through over 6 hours of materials, probably closer to 10-15 hours, to understand this. Every resident is not going to sit through that to educate themselves and make informed decisions. The Commissioners, elected or appointed, are put in these positions to become knowledgeable, evaluate, and make decisions for the best interest of the individuals in this Town.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about being put into the position, elected or appointed, to spend taxpayers' dollars wisely. Said they won't be able to afford stormwater or other things if essentially 20% of the budget goes to Fire. Said it is disrespectful to democracy to believe one appointed person should make the decision over trusting the voters. The data has been geared towards one agenda. We need to get accurate data out, we need to allow the voters to decide, or allow a fully elected Commission to decide with more time.

Motion carried 4-1 with Mayor Alison Dennington dissenting.

Break 8:31 pm to 8:38 pm

Town Clerk Amber Brown conducted roll call

Commission Members Present

Mayor Alison Dennington
Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow
Commissioner Robert Baldwin
Commissioner Anna Butler
Commissioner Tim Reed

Staff Members Present

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Town Attorney Ryan Knight
Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr
Town Clerk Amber Brown

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said the original contingency was \$30,000, which was increased to \$60,000 in case the fire trucks did not sell timely. Once they were sold, that money could be returned. - 3:10:15

Commissioner Robert Baldwin made a motion that we accept the raising of the contingency from \$30,000 to \$60,000 as presented in the budget; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that we accept moving department 42 Grounds to department 41 Public Works; Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that we approve removing the \$4000 transfer from the general fund into EAB; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded;

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about how the removal of this money is not that they do not support EAB. There are still sufficient funds for EAB to do what they want to do.

Motion carried 5-0.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how there was a \$10,000 line item for Circle Park in the Parks Board, but that had been moved to 351. Their funds were depleted, so this \$4,000 transfer would allow them to fund their programs. - 3:15:34

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about how the Commission previously agreed to fund the Parks Board projects.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about Revenue Fund 107 for the Parks and Recreation.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about giving them \$500 from the sale of the signs. \$10,000 is coming in, but restricted to Circle Park or Veterans Park.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about being concerned about having the \$10,000 restricted for Circle Park.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about her recollection of this prior conversation, not wanting the language to say it's restricted to Circle Park, and how it could be used for a Veterans Memorial.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how it can be renamed as restricted to Veterans Memorial.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about the confusion in regards to where the efforts for a Veterans Memorial will go. Spoke about the need to have a bench to label it a park to avoid sex offenders.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked if the \$10,000 is going to cover all veteran-related things, including the banners, a memorial, bricks, etc. It would be okay to encompass all of the veterans' items for \$10,000. - 3:25:00

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how it should be labeled as a Veterans Memorial project, and she really wants to see this done. Spoke about the possibility of grant money.

The Commission had already voted on the \$4,000 transfer at 3:15:20, but voted on the same issue again at 3:28:35, and the motion carried 5-0 both times.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about confirming that the Police Department differential and police officer salary will be paid from Fund 172 for Ocean Park.

Commissioner Anna Butler made a motion that we continue paying for the police officer and differential payments for the Police Department out of Fund 172 Ocean Park; Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow seconded; Motion carried 4-1 with Commissioner Tim Reed dissenting.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about transferring \$100,000 from the general fund to long-term capital for the playground equipment and using carry forward from Fund 175 into long-term capital.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked if \$50,000 a year had been put into long-term capital for the playground equipment.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said no.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr said the only large amount of money is from the skate park.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro went over where the funding came from and spoke about having \$200,000 restricted for the playground unless the Commission decides on a different purpose.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about looking at the whole budget, as a starting point, suggested lowering this to \$100,000 and moving \$100,000 towards the Fire Department.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about recognizing the need to plan ahead and build the fund up. That is a pretty big first step. Opposed to that amount. Maybe around \$50,000.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin spoke about the playground equipment is something everyone can get behind. Maybe get businesses to sponsor different parts. - 3:37:38

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how people will donate for those types of things, so this is an area we could cut a little.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked if Fund 175 could support this line item alone without touching the general fund.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about the projected increase of around \$34,000.

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that we are not doing the \$100,000 transfer from the General Fund to Fund 175 for playground equipment, but that we are going to set aside \$50,000 of Fund 175 to long-term capital for playground equipment; Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about how Fund 351 was designed for road paving and repairs, and it does not seem complete or ready for the budget. - 3:41:28

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about not knowing what the carry-forward number is going to be from Fund 341.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about a line item allocating an amount for paving, and would like to see that pile of money represented here in some fashion.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how the repaving project for Riverside was paid out of Fund 341, so the carry-forward number needs to be calculated from Fund 341 into this fund. This was just to confirm that the Commission would like Fund 351 set up.

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that we do the renaming of Fund 351 to the road paving and repairs as previously agreed to consensus wise; Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked questions about page 6 miscellaneous income. Asked about the trucks and the Fire Corporation.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said the Town owns the trucks, and the Fire Corporation is old, said she could strike that.

Mayor Alison Dennington said she pulled tax returns from 501c3 and wanted to make sure that the boat is not leased, which the Town Manager confirmed.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about Department 11 – election expense number of \$18,634.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said she had \$8,634 for Supervisor of Election and \$10,000 for the Charter Review.

Town Clerk Amber Brown said that number is an estimate they provided to do the election. The \$8,000 estimate is usually very close to what the cost is. Does not know about the \$10,000 Charter Review number.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin asked about the FTE increase, and the Town Clerk confirmed that it was the Deputy Clerk.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked if they changed the he/she from the Charter Review. Suggested another way to change that so they do not have to pay to put it on the ballot.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about Department 19, page 17, the capital outlay and transfer to long-term capital, and asked where the \$15,000 and \$52,000 are heading to.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said the \$52,000 for mill and pave will go to Fund 351. The \$10,000 and \$6,000 are expenses they will have this year for the smoke detector hardwiring and computer replacements.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about page 20, Department 21 in the General Fund, law enforcement. Holiday pay is currently at \$35,000, concerned it is underfunded. Overtime is about \$1,000 a month, thinks \$15,000 would be a more accurate number to have.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said that was increased because of the officers who have to be on duty for Commission meetings. Said they could approach the Police Chief if they do not want to have that anymore.

Mayor Alison Dennington suggested that if the Police Chief is at the meetings, they might not need another officer present.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about Department 21, the Police Department professional services are \$18,120. Suggested rolling the Crime Prevention into Promotional Activities.

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion to consolidate Crime Prevention into Promotional Activities; Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow seconded;

Lauren Hardman – 320 Sixth Ave – Spoke about how the Fire Department has the same thing, fire prevention. Promoting things is different from prevention. It's important to know the difference between the two. - 4:03:56

Motion carried 3-2 with Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow and Commissioner Anna Butler dissenting.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked questions about Department 22 Fire Department. The stipend is increasing to \$40,000, but the \$38,000 budgeted this year has not been spent.

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr said there is still the final quarter, so it will all be spent.

Mayor Alison Dennington confirmed it would still be needed even if they have paid firefighters in the future. Asked about smoke detector hardware.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how this was to hardwire the smoke detectors, so she will check with the Fire Chief.

Town Clerk Amber Brown said the detectors were not changed out; the brain of it was.

Commissioner Tim Reed asked about Fund 107, said the Back to School Bash is not listed.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow believes most things were donated, so if there were any expenses, they would be nominal. Said she volunteered, and it was an amazing turnout.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about adding a placeholder for the Back to School Bash.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow made a motion that we take \$250 from Rec Events to Back to School Bash; Commissioner Anna Butler seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about the headers for expenditures having a scrivener's error when FY 25 and FY 26 are labeled as FY 24. - 4:16:58

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about Special Revenue Fund 175 Ryckman Park.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about allocating the \$100,000 that was reduced from Fund 175.

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion that the \$100,000 in General Fund that was allocated here would be moved to reduce the millage; Mayor Alison Dennington seconded;

Lauren Hardman – 320 Sixth Ave – Spoke about how now there is overage. What is best for all? Roads and the fire department. Here is something that was just given to you. There is only so much you can do with this. Discuss it and be fiscally responsible with all of the other things that were discussed today.

Commissioner Tim Reed said he was making a suggestion, wanted to move things along. If there is other input, let's hear it.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow verified the proposed millage is 4.6, so if you take \$100,000 off that, what would it be?

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about without doing the math right now, it might be around 4.49.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow spoke about how the \$100,000 could be used towards long-term capital for one of the large projects. Would like to table it for the next meeting, when we will have an updated figure.

Motion failed 2-3 with Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow, Commissioner Robert Baldwin, and Commissioner Anna Butler dissenting.

Town Attorney Ryan Knight left the meeting.

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow made a motion that we table the discussion on the \$150,000 until the next discussion to determine if it reduces the millage or go towards something else; Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded;

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about coming up with another meeting time to discuss the open-ended items.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked the Commission if there was any objection to it being tabled which there was not. By consent, it is tabled; there does not need to be a vote.

Motion carried by consent.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about Fund 341, \$40,000 for the anticipated repair of the pipe of Riverview, which he believes should be in Fund 141.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about Fund 341 is for capital projects. It can be funded from Fund 141, but it would still be listed as a capital expense.

Commissioner Tim Reed made a motion for Fund 341 FY26, the \$40,000 allocation for the seawall pipe repair Riverview be carried against Fund 141 expenditures; Commissioner Robert Baldwin seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Tim Reed spoke about Fund 351 is to pave from Riverside to the intersection. Said he would like to see what the whole paving picture looks like.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how Ocean does not need to be repaved, but because FDOT is going to be repaving the intersection, it would be a good time to repave. The curbing needs work. FDOT will do their work between December and March.

Mayor Alison Dennington asked what happens if we don't have a yes or no on the grant.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how you could borrow from the General Fund for the first couple of years while we get a special tax in place.

Commissioner Robert Baldwin said maybe the Fire Chief could start preparing plan B.

Special Town Commission Meeting scheduled for Monday, August 25th at 5:00 pm.

6. Adjournment

Vice Mayor Dawn Barlow made a motion to adjourn; Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.



Alison Dennington
Mayor

ATTEST:



Rachel Pembrook
Transcriptionist

