

TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Minutes of the Special Town Council Meeting Held on September 8, 2025

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 05:01 PM in the Town Council Chambers.

Members Present: Bridget Moran, Ted Cooney, Lewis Crampton, Bobbie Lindsay, Julie Araskog, and Danielle Moore

Staff Present: Kirk Blouin, Bob Miracle, Kelly Churney, and Town Attorney Joanne O'Connor

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council President Lindsay led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council President Pro Tem Crampton to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

COMMENTS

1. MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council Member Araskog asked for prayers for the children who were in their church, praying, when the school shooting occurred in Minnesota.

Council President Pro Tem Crampton explained that he no longer supports keeping the millage rate at 2.611 and will vote instead to lower it to the staff-recommended 2.531. He emphasized that the Town is in excellent financial condition, with strong reserves, consistent budget surpluses, and significant enterprise fund balances, so additional tax revenue is unnecessary. Lowering the rate would save taxpayers modest amounts, but he argued the principle is important: residents should benefit from the Town's financial success. While not critical of his colleagues, he urged them to reconsider and join him in approving the reduced rate.

Council Member Araskog asked staff if they thought the extra money was needed in case of

emergencies, like a hurricane.

Town Manager Blouin emphasized that the staff's role is to provide a balanced budget, not to advocate for a specific millage rate. He recapped both sides of the debate: while Mr. Crampton argued strongly for lowering the rate, others pointed to economic uncertainties, rising capital project costs, potential changes to property tax laws, and reduced FEMA reimbursements as reasons to keep it steady. He highlighted the looming 2027 seawall project, which will reduce parking revenue by about \$1.8 million, and noted other financial pressures such as undergrounding shortfalls and long-term pension contribution declines. Mr. Blouin concluded that either decision is workable, but cautioned that lowering the rate now might require raising it again in 2027, whereas maintaining it provides a cushion against future uncertainties.

Council Member Araskog raised the issue of the government possibly eliminating some FEMA reimbursements. She explained her vote to keep the millage rate unchanged, citing upcoming costs and the need for economic stability. While acknowledging Mr. Crampton's good points, she felt it was wiser to maintain the current rate to ensure the Town can handle rising expenses if projects end up costing more than expected.

Mr. Blouin said his main concern is 2027, when the Town will face revenue losses and uncertainty, particularly with undergrounding shortfalls and future declines in ADEC contributions. While he believes finances will stabilize beyond that point, he cautioned that lowering the millage rate now could force the Town to raise it again in 2027 to balance the budget. He emphasized that it was a judgment call and was not advocating either way, but he wanted to lay out the financial considerations before the Council.

2. PUBLIC - 3 MINUTE LIMIT

No comments were heard at this time.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. Notice of Proposed Property Taxes

Council President Lindsay announced that pursuant to the Notice of Proposed Property Taxes, which the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser had mailed to each property owner, the Public Hearing had been announced to commence at 5:01 PM. She further stated that the discussion would include the Fiscal Year 2026 proposed millage rate and tentative General Fund, Debt Service Fund, and other funds budgets, including the approval of Resolution No. 95-2025 and Resolution No. 103-2025. President Lindsay then announced that a public hearing would also be conducted to discuss non-ad valorem assessments for commercial solid waste collection, town beautification, and underground utility projects, including approving the associated Resolutions.

4. Proposed Operating Millage Rate

Council President Lindsay stated that the Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund proposed an operating millage rate of 2.6110, representing a 7.4% increase over the rollback rate of 2.4310, the rate that would generate the same revenue as last year from existing properties, excluding new construction or improvements.

5. Reasons for Proposed Operating Millage Rate Increase Over the Rolled-Back Millage Rate

Council President Lindsay requested that Town Manager Blouin identify the reasons why the ad valorem taxes were being increased from the rolled-back rate, as required by state law.

Town Manager Blouin explained that the FY2026 General Fund budget increased by \$8,151,345 or 6.84% from the FY2025 budget. The increase is mostly the result of higher salaries, benefits, and contractual costs. Salaries and benefits increased primarily as a result of new positions, which included four police officers for safety and traffic needs, two Police Service Aides, and three and a half full-time equivalent positions in Recreation and Police for the Phipps Park project with the Preservation Foundation. The positions for the Phipps Park project are budgeted for the last two months of FY2026. Rising healthcare and pharmaceutical costs required the town to increase the funding by \$2.5 million for the Healthcare Fund. In addition to inflationary causes, contractual costs increased as a result of operational and technological upgrades, training, legal and security services, and utility expenses.

Council President Lindsay called for public comment. No one indicated a desire to speak.

GENERAL BUSINESS

6. **95-2025** A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Adopting The Proposed Millage Rate Necessary To Fund The Tentative General (Operating) Fund Budget For The 2025-2026 Fiscal Year.

Town Manager Blouin read Resolution 095-2025 by title into the record.

A motion was made by Council President Pro Tem Crampton to approve Resolution 095-2025 with the lower millage rate of 2.531. The motion died for lack of a second.

Town Manager Blouin announced that a supermajority vote was needed to lower the millage rate. Deputy Miracle confirmed this statement.

Council Member Araskog asked about the portion of Phipps Park that was included in the budget. Town Manager Blouin explained that the council agreed to fund certain aspects of the Phipps Park project, which was included in two months of the FY2026 budget.

A motion was made by Council Member Cooney and seconded by Council Member Moran to approve Resolution 095-2025. The motion was carried 4-1, with Council President Pro Tem Crampton dissenting.

Council President Lindsay voted in favor of keeping the millage the same because she anticipated the possibility of needing more Marine Patrol officers to patrol the derelict boats in the Lake Worth Lagoon.

Council Member Araskog asked for confirmation that a budget amendment for that cost could be handled at a later date, to which Mr. Miracle confirmed.

7. **96-2025** A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Relating To Maintenance Of The Peruvian Avenue Improvement Project; Providing Authority, Purpose And Definitions; Confirming The Preliminary Rate Resolution; Approving The Final Assessment Roll; Providing For The Imposition Of The Maintenance Assessments To Fund The Related Maintenance Services For The Fiscal Year Commencing October 1, 2025; Providing For Collection Of The Assessments Pursuant To The Uniform Assessment Collection Act And For The Lien Of The Assessments; Providing Effect; Providing Severability And An Effective Date.

Bob Miracle, Deputy Town Manager, stated that Town staff recommends approval of Resolution No. 096-2025, the preliminary assessment rate resolution for the proposed maintenance assessments for the Peruvian Avenue 400 block streetscape project assessment area in Fiscal Year 2026, with a total assessment amount of \$29,645.

Council President Lindsay called for public comment. No one indicated a desire to speak.

Town Manager Blouin read the Resolution by title.

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council Member Moran to approve Resolution 096-2025. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

8. **97-2025** A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Relating To The Provision Of The Worth Avenue Improvement Project; Providing Authority, Purpose And Definitions; Confirming The Preliminary Rate Resolution; Approving The Final Assessment Rolls; Providing For The Continued Collection Of The Improvement Assessments To Fund The Worth Avenue Improvement Project And Imposition Of The Maintenance Assessments To Fund The Related Maintenance Services For The Fiscal Year Commencing October 1, 2025; Providing For Collection Of The Assessments Pursuant To The Uniform Assessment Collection Act And For The Lien Of The Assessments; Providing Effect; Providing Severability And An Effective Date.

Mr. Miracle stated that Town staff recommends approval of Resolution No. 097-2025, the annual rate resolution for the proposed improvement, debt service, and maintenance assessments for the Worth Avenue commercial district assessment area in Fiscal Year 2026, totaling \$1,189,168.

Town Manager Blouin read the Resolution by title.

Council President Lindsay called for public comment. No one indicated a desire to speak.

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council Member Cooney to approve Resolution 097-2025. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

9. **98-2025** A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Relating To The Provision Of The Underground Utility Improvements Within The Nightingale - La Puerta Assessment Area; Providing

Authority, Purpose And Definitions; Approving The Assessment Roll; Providing For The Continued Collection Of The Assessments To Fund The Underground Utility Improvements Within The Nightingale - La Puerta Assessment Area For The Fiscal Year Commencing October 1, 2025; Providing For Collection Of The Assessments Pursuant To The Uniform Assessment Collection Act And For The Lien Of The Assessments; Providing Effect; Providing Severability And An Effective Date.

Mr. Miracle stated that Town staff recommends approval of Resolution No. 098-2025, the annual rate resolution for the proposed assessments of the Nightingale/La Puerta underground assessment area in Fiscal Year 2025, with a gross assessment amount of \$77,507.03.

Council President Lindsay called for public comment. No one indicated a desire to speak.

Town Manager Blouin read the Resolution by title.

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council Member Cooney to approve Resolution 098-2025. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

- 10. 99-2025** A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Relating To The Provision Of The Underground Utility Improvements Within The Lake Towers Assessment Area; Providing Authority, Purpose And Definitions; Approving The Assessment Roll; Providing For The Continued Collection Of The Assessments To Fund The Underground Utility Improvements Within The Lake Towers Assessment Area For The Fiscal Year Commencing October 1, 2025; Providing For Collection Of The Assessments Pursuant To The Uniform Assessment Collection Act And For The Lien Of The Assessments; Providing Effect; Providing Severability And An Effective Date.

Mr. Miracle stated that Town staff recommends approval of Resolution No. 099-2025, the annual rate resolution for the proposed assessments for the Lake Towers assessment area in Fiscal Year 2026, with a total assessment amount of \$17,309.59.

Town Manager Blouin read the Resolution by title.

Council President Lindsay called for public comment. No one indicated a desire to speak.

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council Member Cooney to approve Resolution 099-2025. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

- 11. 100-2025** A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Relating To The Provision Of The Underground Utility Improvements Within The Via Fontana Assessment Area; Providing Authority, Purpose And Definitions; Approving The Assessment Roll; Providing For The Continued Collection Of The Assessments To Fund The Underground Utility Improvements Within The Via Fontana Assessment Area For The Fiscal Year Commencing October 1, 2025; Providing For Collection Of The Assessments Pursuant To The Uniform Assessment Collection Act And For The Lien Of The Assessments; Providing Effect; Providing Severability And An Effective Date.

Mr. Miracle stated that the Town staff recommends approval of Resolution No. 100-2025, the annual rate resolution for the proposed assessments for the Via Fontana underground assessment area in Fiscal Year 2026, with a total assessment amount of \$18,646.11.

Town Manager Blouin read the Resolution by title.

Council President Lindsay called for public comment. No one indicated a desire to speak.

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council Member Moran to approve Resolution 100-2025. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

- 12. 101-2025** A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Relating To The Provision Of The Underground Utility Improvements Within The Townwide Underground Utility Assessment Area; Providing Authority, Purpose And Definitions; Approving The Assessment Roll; Providing For The Continued Collection Of The Assessments To Fund The Underground Utility Improvements Within The Townwide Underground Utility Assessment Area For The Fiscal Year Commencing October 1, 2025; Providing For Collection Of The Assessments Pursuant To The Uniform Assessment Collection Act And For The Lien Of The Assessments; Providing Effect; Providing Severability And An Effective Date.

Mr. Miracle stated that Town staff recommends approval of Resolution No. 101-2025, which is the annual rate resolution for the proposed assessments for the Town-wide Underground Utility Assessment area in Fiscal Year 2026. The total assessed amount is \$4,059,334.02.

Town Manager Blouin read the Resolution by title.

Council President Lindsay called for public comment. No one indicated a desire to speak.

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council Member Moran to approve Resolution 101-2025. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

- 13. 102-2025** A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Relating To The Collection And Disposal Of Commercial Solid Waste; Providing Authority, Definitions And Interpretation; Confirming The Preliminary Rate Resolution; Establishing The Solid Waste Cost And Rate Of Assessment; Imposing Solid Waste Service Assessments Against Certain Assessed Property Located Within The Town Of Palm Beach For The Fiscal Year Commencing October 1, 2025; Approving The Solid Waste Assessment Roll; Providing For Effect, Severability, And Providing An Effective Date.

Jason Debrincat, Assistant Director of Public Works, recommended that the Town Council adopt resolution 102-2025, which is the annual assessment resolution for the proposed non-ad valorem service assessment for the commercial waste and disposal rates for FY2026 in the amount of \$973,077.

Town Manager Blouin read the Resolution by title.

Council President Lindsay called for public comment. No one indicated a desire to speak.

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council Member Moran to approve Resolution 102-2025. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

14. **103-2025** A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Adopting The Tentative General (Operating) Fund, Debt Service Fund, And Budgets For Other Funds For The 2025-2026 Fiscal Year.

Town Manager Blouin read the Resolution by title.

Council President Lindsay called for public comment. No one indicated a desire to speak.

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council Member Moran to approve Resolution 103-2025. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

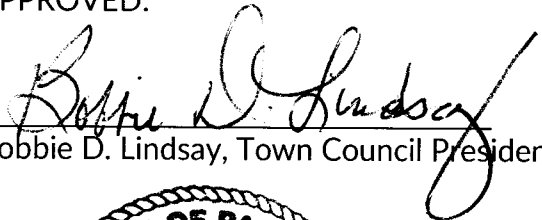
ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other matters discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Council Member Araskog and seconded by Council Member Cooney to adjourn the meeting at 5:40 PM. The motion was carried unanimously, 5-0.

APPROVED:


Bobbie D. Lindsay, Town Council President

APPROVED:


Kelly Churney, CMC, Town Clerk
Date: 10/14/25

