



**Town of Surfside  
Town Commission Budget Workshop  
MINUTES  
May 5, 2020  
7:00 p.m.**

Town Hall Commission Chambers - 9293 Harding Ave, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Surfside, FL 33154

**1. Opening**

**A. Call to Order**

Mayor Burkett called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**B. Roll Call of Members**

Town Clerk McCready called the roll with the following members present:

Present: Mayor Charles Burkett, Vice Mayor Tina Paul, Commissioner Nelly Velasquez, Commissioner Eliana Salzhauer and Commissioner Charles Kesl.

Also present were Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo and Town Attorney Lillian Arango.

**C. Opening Prayer by Fr. Sosa**

Father Sosa was unable to connect to the Zoom Virtual Budget Meeting to give the opening prayer.

**2. FY 2021 Commission Direction Budget Workshop, Discussion and Direction for the FY 2021 Budget– Guillermo Olmedillo, Town Manager**

Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo introduced the item and the procedure of this meeting. He also explained how the process works as well as the Commission's responsibility of establishing and setting the mileage rate.

Town Attorney Arango provided the caveat that this is a Budget Workshop and stated it is a working workshop but no action will be taken. She stated all the Commission can do tonight is give direction to the Finance Director and staff.

Finance Director Greene gave an introduction of the item. He also requested from the Town Commission what their goals would be for the upcoming budget season.

Commissioner Salzhauer thanked Finance Director Greene for his presentation. She stated that what the residents care about is seeing that their money is being put to good use. She also stated she would like to see cleaner streets, cleaning the rain gutters that are clogged, parks to be better lit and cleaner as well as ample lighting in the streets of Surfside.

Commissioner Salzhauer stated that the Town's mileage rate is the lowest it has been and believes the current mileage rate is fine. She also commented on the loss of tourism monies.

Commissioner Kesl stated that it is not certain how the Town's funding will be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and how it will play out with property taxes in the year ahead. He stated that the regional and local economy will bounce back. He commented on being fiscally prudent and to build the reserve for the future and for the unknown. He commented on the loss of tourism monies due to the pandemic.

Vice Mayor Paul commented on a summary of the budgets she has been involved in the last few years. She stated that once it is placed in the budget, it does not come back to the Commission. She would like the beach raking removed since it was supposed to have been a short-term project.

Commissioner Velasquez commented on the importance of underground wiring. She does believe that they need to have reserves for the future and agrees with the mileage rate being where it is at.

Mayor Burkett spoke regarding the mileage rate, the history, the current reserve and the tax revenue the Town is collecting. He commented on the deficit of the Water Department and spoke regarding the bond payments being laid on the Water Department. He commented on giving the residents relief on their water bill payments. He spoke regarding the water cost the Town of Surfside pays to Miami-Dade County. He stated that residents want an immediate relief on the water bill. He spoke regarding the underground wiring of the power lines. He also stated that he would like a line item to deal with the flooding issues.

Mayor Burkett stated that he wants to make sure that the Town is in a good place. He would like to put in the budget a reasonable amount of money to deal with the flooding problems. He also stated that he would like to see the water bill the residents receive go down. He spoke regarding the comparison of the Town's mileage rate with the mileage rate of Bay Harbour, Bal Harbor and Aventura. He would like to see the mileage rate go down to 4.2 where they were in 2008. He stated that does not believe it will be a great financial impact but will assist in lowering the water bill and helping with the money needed for the undergrounding of the power lines and flooding issues.

Commissioner Salzhauer stated that she does not think they can go anywhere with the mileage rate and the difference is not going to make a huge impact and believes that the residents would like to see the money going into their parks.

Commissioner Salzhauer commented on the organizational chart and would like to move away from the outsourcing, money being spent on consultants and have staffing from the Town do the work. She commented that the number one priority is having the streets cleaner, sewers cleaned, parks need to be redone and spend the money on hiring experienced individuals to do the job. She stated that if the staff is not doing their work then they need to be replaced. She commented on spending the money to get the things done correctly.

Commissioner Salzhauer commented on clarification from Finance Director Greene regarding marking up the costs on the water bills.

Finance Director Greene answered the comments made by Commissioners. He stated 4.4 mill of revenue goes into the water fund with 4.1 mill in expenditures.

Mayor Burkett asked how much the Town is paying Miami-Dade County for the water.

Finance Director Greene stated it is on page 254 of the budget book and stated the cost on the sewer and water expenses and discussed the budget line item.

Mayor Burkett spoke regarding the line item on page 254 on the water and sewer cost. He commented on the cost of the water including maintenance cost.

Mayor Burkett spoke regarding operating expenses, professional services, car allowance, credit card fees, vehicle leasing and staffing cost of public works. He stated that they need to get relief to the people that are paying water bills.

Commissioner Salzhauer stated that the money is being spent.

Mayor Burkett spoke regarding programs that can be addressed and overspending. He believes this is one area that he would like the Finance Director work on to give relief to the residents. He stated the water bills are too high and he needs to see how they can be reduced.

Further discussion took place among the Commission on the cost of water bills and direction was given to the Finance Director to come up with a way to reduce the water bill cost to the residents, reducing the mileage rate and the amount of taxes dollars the Town receives from the County per household.

Finance Director Greene addressed the comments made by the Commission regarding the mileage rate, the payments made to Miami-Dade County and the portion the Town gets from Miami-Dade County.

Commissioner Salzhauer spoke regarding the presentation, the tax bill and how much of the taxes paid through Miami-Dade County go to the Town. The residents want to see an amazing Town.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that they need to look at the programs that are able to be cut and are not necessary and that would help us with the loss revenues. The programs that were mentioned to be removed were as follows:

- Big Belly Solar Trash Cans
- Homeless Trust Contribution
- All professional services budget under Legislative
- Beach raking
- Government Academy
- 305 Climate Action Plan
- Urban Land Institute
- Community Digital Signs
- Kayak Launch Grant
- Pay and Classification Study

Vice Mayor Paul spoke regarding the Fiscal Year 2020 budget and spoke regarding the Government Academy Program and that the Florida League of Cities has an online Government Academy Program that is free and the Town can participate.

Finance Director Greene stated that any monies not spent go back into the reserve account.

Vice Mayor Paul requested an overview of all the programs including staff to get an understanding of each one.

Mayor Burkett requested to cancel all of them and have the Town Manager work with the Commission to prudently spend residents tax dollars.

Vice Mayor Paul stated not to cancel all the programs and see what is working.

Mayor Burkett asked if the monies that were not expended are to be found in the reserves.

Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo stated it goes into the reserve at the end of the fiscal year.

Finance Director Greene stated that the monies would roll into the reserves unless a budget amendment is done.

Vice Mayor Paul also spoke regarding the Surfside 305 Strategic Climate Action Plan.

Mayor Burkett asked Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo if those projects have stopped.

Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo stated that all the projects have not stopped. He stated that the salary of the Sustainability and Resiliency Officer comes out of that fund and if the resiliency officer funding is removed then that employee will be terminated.

Commissioner Velasquez commented on positions being created and hired without consulting with the Commission.

Commissioner Salzhauer commented on figuring out who we need at Town Hall and what positions are needed and believes some have been misdirected. She spoke regarding the Resiliency and Sustainability Officer position and stated that that individual could possibly do multiple functions for the Town including writing press releases.

Commissioner Kesl requested from Finance Director Greene an overview of what they are looking at and the comprehensive costs.

Finance Director Greene spoke regarding the debt issuance, the monies issued and gave an update.

Vice Mayor Paul commented on the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget on the Urban Land Institute project.

Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo stated that has not occurred and it was approved by the Town Commission.

Vice Mayor Paul would like the Urban Land Institute project removed and asked if it is in the 305 Plan.

Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo stated that nothing has been done in regards to the Urban Land Institute Project.

Mayor Burkett gave direction with consensus of the Commission to do away with Urban Land Institute (ULI), Surfside 305 Strategic Climate Action and Government Academy.

Commissioner Salzhauer commented on the importance of having procurement personnel and getting rid of several assistants.

Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo stated that the estimated value by the Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser is June 1 and by July 1 they will have the final numbers and by September they will have the final numbers for the setting of the mileage rate.

Mayor Burkett commented on having finance staff come up with a 10% budget savings at the next commission meeting, present and then ask if the Commission will support any cuts or not.

The Town Commission by consensus gave direction to the administration to come with a cost savings of 10% per department for the next commission meeting.

Commissioner Salzhauer commented on unnecessary staff and believes they are paying employees well and department heads getting free vehicles and possibly doing away with take home cars and car allowance for directors.

Mayor Burkett pointed out to the Town Manager that Commissioner Salzhauer suggested how he could reduce the car allowance situation. He also stated that he would like to see him generally cut the expenses by 10% and look at all the programs and all the items that are in the budget. He stated that the Town Manager and the Finance Director are the ones that have the most knowledge of this budget and he would like to hear from them how they could apply their skills in comparison to last year's budget.

Commissioner Salzhauer commented on the cost of CGA and possibly cutting that cost and using Town staff to do those projects.

Commissioner Kesl spoke regarding the acquisition and going out to bid. He would like to put a word in on the agenda item for the future meeting on quality control and quality assurance and the employee cost.

Further discussion took place among the Commission regarding car allowances for staff.

Vice Mayor Paul commented on having Staff tell them how effective the new hires have been and has it helped things, if not, then why they are spending the money and would like to see an evaluation.

Commissioner Salzhauer commented on the frustration many residents have with the parking staff and many other places have furloughed employees.

Mayor Burkett suggested rebranding the vehicles to be able to be used for several things.

Vice Mayor Paul commented on the amount of parking enforcement employees the Town has in comparison to the monies those employees are bringing into the Town. She stated that she would like to see more cross training of employees and gave an example of possibly parking enforcement could do code enforcement.

Commissioner Salzhauer agrees with the comments made by Vice Mayor Paul.

Mayor Burkett and the Town Commission by consensus gave direction for staff to do rebranding of the vehicles and cross training of certain staff positions.

Commissioner Kesl commented on the lifeguards and stated they have been great during this time.

Commissioner Salzhauer stated that she would like to see full time lifeguards and move towards that instead of so many part-time lifeguards.

Mayor Burkett spoke regarding the Tourist Fund, personnel and expenditures. He asked Finance Director Greene how much of the Tourist Fund has been expended.

Vice Mayor Paul commented on the part-time assistant building official.

Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo answered Vice Mayor Paul's question.

Vice Mayor Paul asked if he was demoted due to performance.

Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo stated that it did not have to be a permanent position but would be a building official that could fill in for our Building Official when he is out.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that this does not make sense and it could be a full-time inspector instead of a part-time inspector and could do multiple tasks.

Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo stated that they reorganized the department to serve the residents better and the inspectors they have in different traits are all part-time..

Commissioner Salzhauer stated that they need to streamline things and look at every department and residents are not happy with the way things are currently. She spoke regarding the Police Department budget and residents do not feel the improvement.

Mayor Burkett stated that they take in 3.3 million dollars and they spend promoting Surfside as a tourist destination \$810,000 (\$70,000 a month) for advertising for such a small town. He would like to direct administration to stop spending this money and determine reprogramming that funding to the tourists that are coming into town. Consensus by the Commission was reached on this direction.

Town Attorney Arango provided the Town Commission the Ordinance on the distribution of Tourism dollars.

Discussion took place regarding the salary and benefits for the Tourist Director as well as the funds being spent.

Vice Mayor Paul spoke regarding 92<sup>nd</sup> Street ends and nothing has been done. She spoke regarding the trees that line those streets and the trees were removed and would like to see a plan in improving the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street ends.

Commissioner Salzhauer asked for funds to be put aside for the beaches to be spotless.

Commissioner Kesl commented on educating the community on the operation of the Town through the government academy and believes it's a great idea.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that she did not know there was much interest in that program and the Florida League of Cities has a great program that we can have on our website and if residents are interested then they can reconsider.

Commissioner Salzhauer commented on doing the free program and not spending money on the Town's program. Consensus was reached to remove the Government Academy from the budget.

Mayor Burkett requested clarification on the Classification and Pay Study.

Human Resources Director Slate-McCloud explained what this study entails and stated it was a pay study.

Mayor Burkett requested to remove this from the budget and consensus was reached to remove the Classification and Pay Study from the budget.

Mayor Burkett asked regarding the Paid Parental Leave Program.

Human Resources Director Slate-McCloud explained the Paid Parental Leave Program.

Mayor Burkett asked why it was in the budget this year.

Human Resources Director Slate-McCloud stated that some residents reached out and asked that Surfside participate.

Commissioner Salzhauer agreed that this should take place and they should be part of it.

Commissioner Kesl asked if this has to do with some expansion with COVID-19.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that it was pre COVID-19 and that it has to do with taking care of elderly family members.

Mayor Burkett and the Town Commission reached consensus to leave the Paid Parental Leave Program in the budget.

Mayor Burkett and the Town Commission reached consensus to remove the Surfside 305 Plan from the budget.

Mayor Burkett spoke regarding the new police officer position.

Commissioner Salzhauer stated that they need to deliver the results that the residents need and the reason why they need an additional position.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that she would like to see the improvements the Police Department would have with this new position.

Police Chief Yero answered the questions made by the Commission regarding police staffing.

Commissioner Kesl asked Police Chief Yero regarding staffing of the Police Department and requested for Police Chief Yero to do a 5% to 10% cut of his department.

Vice Mayor Paul supports the Police Department and would only ask for their parking officers to be able to assist the Code Enforcement Department.

Commissioner Salzhauer supports the Police Department and was just asking regarding the staffing on the list and the 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Mayor Burkett spoke regarding Parks and Recreation, lifeguards, custodian, painting of the Community Center and the \$300,000 budget that comes out of the Tourist Fund.

Commissioner Kesl commented on that fund and does not know regarding the capital improvement work of the community center and how it can be divided.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that there are a lot of lifeguards and part-time staff but understands it has grown due to children using their programs. She stated that she would not want to cut that department and would like to know why the full-time position is still vacant and would like more cleaning of the center.

Parks and Recreation Director Milian addressed the comments and questions made by Vice Mayor Paul.

Discussion took place regarding the hiring of a Public Works Department employee to take care of the water lines.

Public Works Director Stokes commented that Public Works Department Employee Hector Garcia has worked for the Town for 30 years and is in the DROP Program and they would need to train someone to take his position. He stated that if the Town Commission desires, they could wait another year to fill that position if necessary.

The Town Commission agreed by consensus in giving the Public Works Department what they need in order to assist the residents.

Mayor Burkett discussed the parking officer requested and asked Police Chief Yero to address that question.

Police Chief Yero answered the question made by Mayor Burkett and stated that it all started with the double-parking situation, the police department logistics and stated other duties they do in order to not lose police officers on the streets.

Commissioner Velasquez asked regarding the parking operations manager position.

Police Chief Yero stated that person stays in the office 90% of the time and he runs the Parking Enforcement Section and also handles the property room for the Police Department and backs up the dispatcher.

Commissioner Velasquez asked regarding the administrative aid position.

Police Chief Yero answered that question and stated that person is the assistant to the Chief's administrative assistant.

Commissioner Salzhauer stated that they have enough with parking enforcement and stated that they aren't working as hard as they should be.

Further discussion took place among the Commission and Police Chief Yero regarding staffing and parking enforcement staffing.

The Town Commission reached consensus to keep the additional parking officer position.

Mayor Burkett objects to the additional fixed digital board sign.

The Town Commission reached consensus on removing the additional digital sign, removing the solar panels and kayak launch.

The Town Commission asked regarding the police radios.

Police Chief Yero stated the change in Miami Dade County police radios and the need of keeping up with the standards since Miami-Dade County handles their communications.

Commissioner Velasquez requested the savings be used to purchase body cams for the police officers.

Commissioner Salzhauer asked Finance Director Greene regarding the \$50,000 for the kayak launch.

Finance Director Green answered Commissioner Salzhauer question on the kayak launch.

Commissioner Velasquez asked if they have to wait for the new budget for body cams.

Police Chief Yero stated that it would cost \$125,000 for the body cams.

Mayor Burkett directed the Town Manager Guillermo Olmedillo to add police body cams to the agenda.

The Town Commission by consensus agreed to keep the Biscaya Island Water, police handheld radios, and the garbage trucks to replace the 2005 ones.

Discussion continued regarding expenditures on the list including lobbyist expenditures on the legislative budget.

Finance Director Greene answered the Commission's question regarding different programs made and legislative categories.

Mayor Burkett requested for all Commissioners to be educated on what the role of a lobbyist is before deciding to keep or do away with the lobbyist.

Commissioner Salzhauer asked about the \$74,000 on other grants and aids and if that is being used to pay the lobbyists.

Discussion continued regarding the non-profits donations and the Town Commission agreed by consensus to not give any more monies to the Homeless Trust Fund.

Direction was given to staff to come up with a report with all communication reports and costs entailed.

Commissioner Velasquez asked what the status is on the monies being spent on the 96<sup>th</sup> Street Park and what is the update on that project.

Town Clerk McCready answered Commissioner Velasquez' question on the 96<sup>th</sup> Street Park and stated that the opening of the RFQ to select an architectural and design firm will be on May 28, 2020.

Discussion took place regarding the funding to complete the 96<sup>th</sup> Street Park and consensus was reached to add this to the budget.

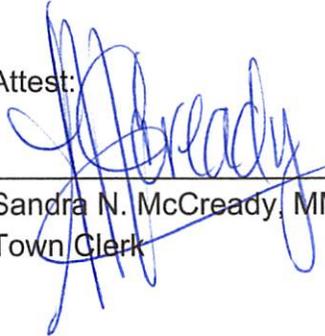
Discussion took place on the next budget workshop and when the decision has to be made by the Commission on the mileage rate.

### **3. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Paul to adjourn the meeting without objection at 10:34 p.m. The motion received a second from Commissioner Kesl. All voted in favor.

Accepted this 9<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020.

  
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Charles W. Burkett, Mayor

Attest:  
  
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Sandra N. McCreedy, MMC  
Town Clerk