

The City Council in and for the citizens of the City of Lake City, Florida, met in a Special Called Session, on September 11, 2023 beginning at 6:00 PM, in the City Council Chambers, located at City Hall 205 North Marion Avenue, Lake City, Florida. Members of the public also viewed the meeting on our YouTube Channel.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION – Reverend Pamela Green

ROLL CALL

Mayor/Council Member
City Council

Stephen M. Witt
Jake Hill, Jr.
C. Todd Sampson
Chevella Young
Ricky Jernigan
Todd Kennon
Paul Dyal (attended by phone)
Chief Gerald Butler
Audrey Sikes

City Attorney
City Manager
Sergeant-at-Arms
City Clerk

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Hill made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Sampson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

- Susan Adel
- Davion Jones
- John Cole
- Pamela Green
- Glenel Bowden
- Sylvester Warren
- Vanessa George

FIRE ASSESSMENT/BUDGET HEARINGS

At this time Mayor Witt closed the regular session and opened a public hearing on the Proposed Fire Protection Assessment Rates for Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2023. Mayor Witt asked if anyone wanted to be heard regarding the Proposed Fire Protection Assessment Rates for Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2023. After hearing public comment from Bradley Jackson (opposition of increase), Sheila Haggert (opposition of increase), Befafithful Coker (opposition of increase), Glenel Bowden (opposition of increase) and Sylvester Warren (opposition of increase) regarding the Proposed Fire Protection Assessment Rates for Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2023, Mayor Witt closed the public hearing.

- 1. City Council Resolution No. 2023-107 - A resolution of the City Council of the City of Lake City, Florida, constituting the FY 2023-2024 annual fire assessment resolution, relating to the provision of fire protection services, facilities and programs in the City of Lake City, Florida; reimposing fire protection assessments against assessed property located within the City of Lake City for fiscal year beginning October 1, 2023; approving the rates of assessment; approving the final assessment roll; confirming and supplementing the 2023 preliminary rate resolution; providing for severability; and providing an effective date. **Mayor Witt made a motion to approve City Council Resolution No. 2023-107, constituting the FY 2023-2024 annual fire assessment resolution, relating to the provision of fire protection services, facilities and programs in the City of Lake City, Florida; reimposing fire protection assessments against assessed property located within the City of Lake City for fiscal year beginning October 1, 2023; approving the rates of assessment; approving the final assessment roll, and confirming and supplementing the 2023 preliminary rate resolution. Mr. Jernigan seconded the motion.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: Charles Bowen

Chief Wehinger explained the increase in the fire assessment for FY 2023-2024.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Mayor Witt	Aye
Mr. Jernigan	Aye
Mr. Hill	Nay
Mr. Sampson	Aye
Ms. Young	Nay

At this time Mayor Witt opened a public hearing to accept input from all interested parties relative to the discussion, consideration, and tentative approval of the City’s 2023-2024 proposed millage rate and operating budget. Mayor Witt stated the City was offering the opportunity to all in attendance to speak in regard to the budget and ask that all speakers identify themselves by name and address. Mayor Witt stated the Finance Director would provide a summary of the budget process and address those items essential to compliance with the State of Florida Truth In Millage (TRIM) requirements.

Finance Director Angie Moore reported The City Council proposes a tentative millage rate of 4.9000 mills and a tentative capital and operating budget of \$74,899,172 for fiscal year 2023-2024. She stated council action tonight constitutes the “tentative” budget hearing as required by State TRIM criteria and was announced to the General Public by TRIM notices mailed by the Columbia County Property Appraiser on August 14, 2023. Ms. Moore reported during this hearing, the following agenda will be addressed:

- The Council will discuss the 2023-2024 millage and operating budget and allow citizen input as appropriate.
- The Council will direct announcement of the tentative millage rate proposed for adoption and of any increase, decrease, or no change.
- The City Attorney will read, by title, Millage Resolution No. 2023-101.
- The Council will adopt Millage Resolution No. 2023-101 on first reading.

- The City Attorney will read, by title, Budget Resolution No. 2023-102.
- The Council will adopt Budget Resolution No. 2023-102 on first reading.

Mayor Witt declared the “Tentative Budget Hearing” open for discussion for public input followed by discussion by the City Council.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Glenel Bowden; Sylvester Warren

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Mr. Jernigan stated he would like to see funding in the amount of \$100,000.00 for programs and have that fund named after Mariah Smith. He also supported eliminating funding for a council vehicle.

Mr. Hill concurred with the removal of the council vehicle as a line item in the budget and spoke on community issues.

Mayor Witt closed the public hearing.

Mayor Witt asked the Finance Director to state for the record 1) the taxing authority, 2) the proposed millage rate to be adopted, 3) the rolled-back millage rate, and 4) any change the tentative millage rate represents to the current year’s millage.

Finance Director Angie Moore stated the City Council of the City of Lake City, as Taxing Authority, proposes a tentative tax on all property located within the City of Lake City, Florida, at the rate of 4.9000 mills for the fiscal year 2023-2024 operating budget. She reported the current year proposed operating millage rate is an 7.30% increase from the 4.5668 rolled-back millage rate as defined by Florida Statutes and represents no change from the previous year’s millage rate of 4.9000 mills.

2. City Council Resolution No. 2023-101 - A resolution of the City Council of the City of Lake City, Florida, adopting a millage rate for the levy of ad valorem taxes for the City for fiscal year 2023-2024; and providing an effective date. **Mr. Sampson made a motion to approve City Council Resolution No. 2023-101, adopting a millage rate for the levy of ad valorem taxes for the City for fiscal year 2023-2024. Mr. Jernigan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.**

Mr. Sampson	Aye
Mr. Jernigan	Aye
Mr. Hill	Nay
Ms. Young	Aye
Mayor Witt	Aye

3. City Council Resolution No. 2023-102 - A resolution of the City Council of the City of Lake City, Florida, adopting the budget for fiscal year 2023-2024; and providing for an effective date. **Mr. Jernigan made a motion to approve City Council Resolution No. 2023-102, adopting the budget for fiscal year 2023-2024. Mayor Witt seconded the motion.**

Mr. Sampson spoke in support of expanding undesignated programs with ARPA Funds in the amount of \$100,000.00 to \$150,000.00 for community-based programs for violence intervention. He suggested removing the Council vehicle as a line item from the Council Budget, in addition to rolling back the 3% raise for Council.

Mr. Jernigan amended his motion as follows, to approve City Council Resolution No. 2023-102, adopting the budget for fiscal year 2023-2024. The motion also authorizes the following: the addition of a Public Assistance line item in the amount of \$200,000.00 for gun violence prevention programs in honor of Mariah Smith identifying ARPA Funds as the funding source; removal of the council vehicle and removal of the 3% salary increase for the Mayor and Council Members. Mayor Witt seconded the amended motion.

Ms. Young discussed Special Events and stated entities should follow the application process.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Sylvester Warren

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Mr. Jernigan	Aye
Mayor Witt	Aye
Mr. Hill	Nay
Mr. Sampson	Aye
Ms. Young	Aye

4. City Council Resolution No. 2023-111 - A resolution of the City Council of the City of Lake City, Florida, authorizing the execution of an Interlocal Agreement with Columbia County, Florida, the City of Lake City, Florida, and the Town of Fort White, Florida, related to Emergency Management; providing for severability; providing for conflicts; and providing an effective date.

Attorney Kennon provided a summary of the Interlocal Agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Befateful Coker

Mr. Sampson made a motion to approve City Council Resolution No. 2023-111, authorizing the execution of an Interlocal Agreement with Columbia County, Florida, the City of Lake City, Florida, and the Town of Fort White, Florida, related to Emergency Management. Mr. Jernigan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Mr. Sampson	Aye
Mr. Jernigan	Aye
Mr. Hill	Aye
Ms. Young	Aye
Mayor Witt	Aye

COMMENTS BY COUNCIL

Mayor Witt thanked Reverend Green for the prayer and thanked staff for their work on the budget.

ADJOURNMENT

All matters having been handled, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM on a motion made and duly seconded.

Stephen M. Witt, Mayor/Council Member

Audrey Sikes, City Clerk