



Village of El Portal
First Budget Hearing
Date: 9/10/21
Meeting Start: 6:12 PM
Meeting End: 6:28 PM
Meeting Length: 00:16:07

Mayor Nickerson: All right, you guys. The Village of El Portal first budget hearing for the fiscal year 2022 on Friday, September the 10th, 2021 is called to order at 6:12 PM.

[bangs gavel] First, we're going to have a moment of silent meditation, then it'll be followed by Pledge of Allegiance.

[silence]

All: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Mayor Nickerson: Thank you very much. Madam Clerk, may I please have roll call, please?

Village Clerk Jacobi: Roll call. Vice Mayor Urbom is not going to be here today. Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Nickerson: Here.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela.

Councilperson Pirela: Here.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Here.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Martin.

Councilperson Martin: Present.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Also present for the record is Yenise Jacobi, village clerk, Christia Alou, village manager, Chris Wallace, CFO, Chief Magnusson, and the attorney's on the way. You have a quorum.

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Mayor Nickerson: Thank you very much. Appreciate that, Madam Clerk. Moving on to approval of the agenda, we have two resolutions that we'll be looking at today. Do I have a motion to approve the agenda?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: So moved.

Mayor Nickerson: Moved by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do I have a second?

Councilperson Martin: Second.

Mayor Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Martin. All in favor say "Aye."

Agreers: Aye.

Mayor Nickerson: Next is good and welfare. Do I see anybody for good and welfare? I don't see anybody for good and welfare, but I just want to say really quickly, you guys, I do want to acknowledge that today is September 11th. I mean, today is September 10th, tomorrow is September the 11th. It has been 20 years since that tragedy in our nation.

While we wait for Attorney Geller to get here because he needs to read the resolutions into record before we move on, I'm going to open up to the council or anybody here if you guys have anything that you may want to say about the 20th anniversary. It seems like 20 years go by so fast. It seems like that was just like-- I remember it like it was yesterday. Man, 20 years, time flies.

It's interesting because it changed our country so much in so many different ways that it'll always be like that, that change that we went through. We keep those individuals from that day in our prayers. We keep the survivors and first responders from that day in our prayers, and like I said, I just wanted to just acknowledge that while we're here because we don't have a meeting tomorrow on September the 11th and today's the day before that. I just wanted to say that.

I'm opening it up, anybody can make any comments that they want to while we wait for Attorney Geller.

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[silence]

Okay. Hearing none, I appreciate you guys. I do want to also say that we do have, coming up, a slew of meetings. We have coming up on Tuesday, we have our special assessment, our budget special assessment, and that's at 6:15 PM, and it's going to be here in village hall. After that, we have our committee meetings starting at 6:30. The budget assessment is at 6:15 PM, and right after that, we have our committee meetings, which will be the planning and zoning committee, the administration and finance committee, and our public affairs committee. We have that also this upcoming Tuesday, September 14th, you guys, so just keep that in mind.

We have our second budget hearing on Thursday, September 23rd at 6:00 PM. Thursday, September 23rd at 6:00 PM is our second budget hearing. Of course, our full regular council meeting is Tuesday, September 28th. Our full regular council meeting is Tuesday, September 28th. Attorney Geller is here for the record. We're going to move on to agenda items, you guys. Agenda item resolution 2021 is the first one we're going to do. Resolution 2021, the adoption of the ad valorem tax rate. Attorney Geller.

Attorney Geller: Resolution number 2021-21, a resolution of the mayor and village council of the Village of El Portal, Florida of Miami-Dade County, Florida adopting the final levying of ad valorem taxes of 8.30 mills which is more than the rollback rate of 7.6428 mills by 8.6% for the Village of El Portal of Miami-Dade County for fiscal year 2021-22, providing for an incorporation of recitals, providing for an effective date.

Mayor Nickerson: Does anybody from the council-- Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. Does anybody from the council have any questions or comments about this resolution? The budget is part of the next resolution, you guys, so if you have any questions or comments about the budget itself, that's in the second resolution, but does anybody have any questions or comments about this first resolution?

?Councilperson Lightfoot: [unintelligible 00:05:20]

Mayor Nickerson: Yes, I will. Hearing none, public hearing for the first resolution, the adoption of the ad valorem tax rate 6:17 PM. Hearing none, close for the adoption of the ad

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valorem tax rate resolution, 6:17 PM. [bangs gavel] That being said, if there's no more discussion, do I have a motion to adopt resolution 2021-21?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: So moved.

Mayor Nickerson: Motion moved by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do I have a second?

Councilperson Pirela: I second.

Mayor Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Pirela. Madam Clerk, may I please have roll call on resolution 2021-21?

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Martin.

Councilperson Martin: Yes.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela.

Councilperson Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Motion passes four to none.

Mayor Nickerson: Thank you very much. Moving on to the next resolution, resolution 2021-22. This is the adoption of the budget for fiscal year '22, you guys. Adoption of the budget itself for fiscal year '22. This is the first budget hearing, of course, we will have a second--

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Attorney Geller: Mayor, I'm sorry. Even though I read it in the resolution, just for the record on item one, we are supposed to read into the record about the rollback rate, so let me go ahead and just read that into the record. The millage rate being levied is 8.30 mills. The rollback rate, as we stated, is 7.6428 mills. The proposed final levy exceeds the rollback rate by 8.6%.

That's just got to be read into the record by law and we've done so. We read it, actually, as part of the resolution as well, but it is supposed to be read in, and I believe what we've done by doing that, now complies.

Mayor Nickerson: Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. Appreciate that.

Attorney Geller: Sorry about that.

Mayor Nickerson: No problem, you're good.

Attorney Geller: Then moving on to resolution 2021-22.

[phone ringing]

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: [unintelligible 00:07:30]

Mayor Nickerson: Yes, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: I don't want to-- Give me a minute. Do you want to tell the residents why we have the millage rate the way it is, Mayor? It's not **[unintelligible 00:07:44]** because the question has been asked, "Why are we exceeding so much?" There's an explanation for it. I think a slight-- At least an understanding to the villagers and why the last four years, we've exceeded the ad valorem, we've exceeded the rate by such a wide margin.

Mayor Nickerson: Well, when I first came on the council, the millage rate was lower, a little bit lower, but then years ago, many years ago, it was actually higher, and I remember that a few years ago, we lowered it to 8.3. It was 8.6 or 5 or something like that, I believe it was,

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under previous administration, and we lowered it to 8.3. What started to happen was we had a couple of hurricanes that came through and it killed our reserves just to be frank.

It killed our reserves, and that was many years ago. It killed our reserves, and then the Irma came through after-- I forgot the name of the first that killed our reserves, then Irma came through, and that's where we got into the whole thing with the current situation we're in with FEMA and stuff now, but it was raised because the first hurricane that came through many years ago when I believe Jason Walker was the manager, it killed our reserves, and we just needed to have more operation. It was under his suggestion that it was raised at that point, and it was raised to, I believe, 8.5 or 8.6, and then we lowered it down to 8.3 and that's how it's been recently.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you, Mayor. That's the explanation I wanted because you repeated it before.

Mayor Nickerson: No problem.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: That's the explanation that I was hoping that you would allow people to understand, that we are aware that it's pretty high. We also are equally aware of the need to rebuild what was a very healthy reserve. Thank you, sir. You did a good job with that.

Mayor Nickerson: Absolutely. Thank you very much. We do plan to rebuild that. Like I said, everybody understands that we're still in that FEMA situation now with the federal government and so once that's resolved, I'm sure that we can get back to where we used to be. Thank you very much Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. I appreciate that. Thank you. Attorney Geller.

Attorney Geller: Resolution Number 2021-22. Resolution to the mayor and village council, the village of El Portal, Florida, of Miami Dade County, Florida adopting and approving the annual operating budget of \$3,990,565 for fiscal year 2021- 2022, providing for a corporation of recitals, providing for an effective date and exhibit A attached is the actual budget.

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Mayor Nickerson: Right now, you guys, if you guys have any questions or comments about the budget itself, we did have the budget workshop last Saturday when we went through everything line by line. We've done those updates from the notes that came out of there that my southern division manager took and she made the changes due to the notes that came out of there.

Are there any particular line items that you guys want to discuss or ask about? Again, as I said, we went to everything through the workshop but if anybody from the council has anything that they want to go back to from the workshop, you can do so before we read this, or before we take a vote.

Councilperson Martin: I have a quick question for the manager, I just wanted to get because we did work through the budget a lot over the weekend and I want to get an idea of what that total amount was that we were able to move into reserves based on those amendments that we made.

Mayor Nickerson: I have right here if you want it. It's 81,530, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Martin: That's awesome.

Mayor Nickerson: 81,530. Let me just say we do have to go back through it one more time, just to make sure we don't have any outstanding receipts or anything that have come in that we just had-- might have got lost or something like that, or whatever. We have to look through it one more time but it's not going to change much from that. It wouldn't go down much from that but we just might have some outstanding receipts that might have come in like this week or last week that just might not have gone through the financial department yet that might have been on that. It's going to be-- but Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, we were at 28. We're up to like 80,000. Now, look at that.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: I got that. I have a question.

Mayor Nickerson: Go ahead.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: For the benefit of the general public, what was it last year?

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Mayor Nickerson: Last year was 48,000.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: No, no. The operating budget now is 3.9. What was it last year? Because I couldn't see it anywhere in the totals and I just curious to be able to tell the residence why we're doing what we're doing. I saw on the projected year in we were supposed to be at \$3,000 099,833 for the general fund revenues. We're talking about our operating budget at 3.9. I'm sure and if we don't have it, we can get it next at the next meeting. We don't have it today but they need to really know why we worked so hard to get it to a place where we are now. For the listening audience, do we have anyone on the line?

Mayor Nickerson: No.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: For the listening audience or whoever wants to hear the transcript later, it doesn't matter, we did two and a half, almost three hours in a workshop this past weekend-

Mayor Nickerson: Saturday, yes.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: -getting us to a place where we knew we were about a few digits off of \$4 million. Just a few points off, but we worked hard. As the mayor says, as time rolls on, it may get lower. It may get higher but we have been frugal for two and we were frugal almost three hours trying to not ignore the fact that we still have people that don't have a budget. The city has a budget.

What condition we are, I expect that the revenue guy will tell us one day where we are in terms of where we stand as a little city with the budget at the level that it is because it would have been higher. It would have been very much higher. I'll look for that report when the right time comes.

Mayor Nickerson: Thank you very much Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Anybody else, any questions about the budget, you guys? No. Hearing none, I'm closing up for public comment at 6:27 PM. [bangs gavel] Hearing no public comment on resolution 2021- 2022, closing public comment at 6:27 PM. [bangs gavel] Do we have a motion to approve resolution 2021-2022 adoption of the budget for fiscal year 2022. You have a motion?

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Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: So moved.

Mayor Nickerson: Motion moved by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do I have a second?

Councilperson Pirela: I second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Pirela. Madam Clerk, may I please have a roll call, please.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Martin?

Councilperson Martin: Yes.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela?

Councilperson Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Motion passes four to none.

Mayor Nickerson: Thank you very much. I appreciate it. Next, we're going on the good and welfare. If anybody has anything that they want to say about anything at all, now's your time to do so. Say your name and address for the record. Hearing none moving on to adjournment? Do we have a motion to adjourn?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: So moved.

Mayor Nickerson: I have a motion to move by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do I have a second?

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Councilperson Martin: I second.

Mayor Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Martin. The village of El Portal first budget hearing for fiscal year 2022 is adjourned on Friday, September 10th, 2021 at 6:28 PM. [bangs gavel] Thank you very much, you guys. Appreciate it. Second budget hearing the 23rd, you guys, second budget hearing will be on the 23rd.

Attorney Geller: Thank you.

[00:16:07] [END OF AUDIO]

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