

BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING

Tuesday, June 10, 2008  
6:00 p.m.

PALM BEACH SHORES TOWN COMMISSION  
247 EDWARDS LANE

THOMAS MILLS  
MAYOR\_ \_\_\_\_

LISA A. TROPEPE  
VICE MAYOR\_\_\_\_\_

ALAN D. FIERS  
COMMISSIONER\_\_\_\_\_

THOMAS R. SULLIVAN  
COMMISSIONER\_\_\_\_\_

JOHN M. WORKMAN  
COMMISSIONER\_\_\_\_\_

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**AGENDA**

1. Discussion: Building/Code Enforcement department expenses for 2008-2009.
2. Discussion: EMS department expenses for 2008-2009.
3. Discussion: Fire department expenses for 2008-2009.

**MINUTES**

The workshop meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Thomas Mills, who led the assembled in the pledge to the flag. Roll call revealed that all members were present. In addition, Town Administrator Cindy Lindskoog, Town Clerk Carolyn Gangwer, Fire Chief Larry Fauci and Police Captain Steve Kniffin were present.

Before addressing the first agenda item, the Mayor presented a brief presentation related to expected property tax revenues compared to current year tax receipts, and expected revenues from the state, FPL and other sources. The Mayor opined that based on information received so far, the 2008-2009 budget will be tight.

Commissioner Fiers clarified that the town should expect approximately 6.5% less in tax revenues next year.

**1. Discussion: Building/Code Enforcement department.**

Town Clerk Gangwer gave a brief presentation regarding correspondence received just yesterday from the town's building inspection service, Hybyrd Inspections. The letter requests increases in fees for plan reviews, to initiate a \$40/inspection fee and to increase the hours that the town is being billed for Code Enforcement services.

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Discussion included why the threshold for a plan review should be reduced from \$500,000 to \$50,000, could some of these fees be passed on to the applicants, and how much the annual increase would be for the town if these higher costs came into effect.

Town staff was directed to reach out to other municipalities who contract with Hybyrd to see if their costs are going up. In addition, staff was asked to see what type of building official/inspection set up other cities use.

It was determined that more information on how the requested increases would impact the budget was needed before the departmental budget could be reviewed. The increases proposed by Hybyrd will be placed on next Monday's Commission meeting for discussion.

### **2. Discussion: EMS department expenses for 2008-2009.**

Mayor Mills explained that the town contracts with Riviera Beach for emergency medical services. He characterized the service as very good. The contract is for multiple years with a fixed percentage of increase each year.

Commissioner Fiers asked if a fuel surcharge increase was likely? Chief Fauci explained that the patients that are transported are billed, and they would probably be charged any future fuel surcharge.

The number of annual calls was discussed. Mayor Mills noted that the town receives a written report from Riviera Beach EMS each quarter listing calls, etc.

The Commission was satisfied with the proposed EMS departmental budget as presented.

### **3. Discussion: Fire department expenses for 2008-2009.**

Fire Chief Fauci was present to answer questions. Discussion included:

Stipends: Chief Fauci opined that the stipend program seems to be working OK, particularly for those volunteers who live in town. Mayor Mills stated that he would like to have the stipend program reviewed by the Commission. He noted that the same people get the stipend payments each year. Mayor Mills asked the Fire Chief to look into how to upgrade his department using other methods. The Mayor noted that stipends in budget year 2005-2006 peaked because the award criteria hadn't really been finalized, and nearly everyone got a stipend that year. Since then, these awards have been based on more realistic requirements.

There followed a general discussion of how many volunteers are certified in certain positions. Chief Fauci explained that there are currently 3 or 4 who have Firefighter I status, with 4 or 5 more working on attaining this level. He noted that 300+ hours of training are required for FFI, and over 600 hours are required to attain FFII. The chief noted that three of the volunteers are currently certified as instructors. Discussion continued

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over the issues of how many volunteers are actively involved in training, how many are responding to drills, calls, etc.

Mayor Mills stated that, the town's back up "insurance" is an ongoing contract with Riviera Beach Fire Department for fire backup services, up to 48 calls per year included.

Liability Insurance: The amount in this line remains nearly the same as actual this year. With the town going out for RFP for insurance services, the actual cost won't be known until later in July.

Personnel costs: Town Administrator Lindskoog explained that until more is known about the results of PBA negotiations, the salary lines will be left flat. Historically, the increases given to the police personnel are mirrored in all other departments. The Cost of Living Adjustment has not been determined yet, she noted.

Wireless & Pagers: this budget line was reduced because the cost of purchase of pagers was moved to Small Equipment. This line covers only service.

Radio Maintenance: \$700 remains in this line.

Building Maintenance: Chief Fauci and Administrator Lindskoog concurred that \$2500 is necessary for any repairs to the fire department garage/office area.

Uniforms/Protective Gear: this is set at \$5,000 because the cost of replacing just one air pack has gone up to \$7500.

Gas & Oil: There was some discussion regarding how to forecast fuel costs for next year. Commissioner Fiers recommended choosing a number based on this year's usage to date, and prorate at \$5.00/gallon.

Commissioner Workman asked how long the town could operate its vehicles from the 1,000 gallon tank before it emptied? Capt. Kniffin recalled that the town had gone up to 8 days on that tank, with very judicious use of fuel.

There seemed to be general agreement that the fire department budget was reasonable. The issues of cost of personnel, liability insurance and fuel will be readdressed later in the process.

### **BOARD COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Fiers recommended that the town should only spend what revenues it will be receiving. Residents' incomes aren't going to increase very much, so their tax burden from the town should not go up. Mr. Fiers suggested that the town should look at reducing wherever possible as an example to other cities and to the county.

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Vice Mayor Tropepe opined that, in past years, the Town of Palm Beach Shores has been fiscally conservative. She stated that there are some items 'in the pipeline', which the Commission has inherited.

Commissioner Workman questioned the equality of the state's Homestead Exemption.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

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Carolyn J. Gangwer, Town Clerk

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Thomas R. Mills, Mayor