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Melbourne Messenger



Community
Information
from the
City of
Melbourne

September 2008

Two public hearings invite community comments on City budget plans

The City Council has set public hearings for 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 16 and Sept. 30 at City Hall to discuss the proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1.

The proposed budget is about \$2.3-million lower than the current year budget. A variety of improvement projects and scheduled equipment replacements are delayed to reduce expenditures.

The \$155.1-million proposed budget is based on reduced revenue due to mandated changes in taxable property values and declines in other revenue sources. At the same time, costs continue to increase.

The taxable property value within the City of Melbourne is \$4.9-billion, reduced by \$400-million by actions taken by the state legislature and approved by voters.

The property tax rate is proposed to be \$4.51 per \$1,000 of taxable property valuation (a 4.511 millage rate).

The current property tax level is \$4.48 per \$1,000 of taxable value. The proposed rate is considered a tax decrease under state law because it is less than the 'rolled back' millage rate of 4.7251 mills that would generate the same level of property tax revenue that is available in the current budget year.

The proposal for the \$67.2-million General Fund budget, which pays for day to day operations, is \$3.4-million below the current level.

The proposed budget is intended to maintain City services at current levels while deferring many planned equipment purchases and

improvement projects.

The proposed budget maintains a hiring freeze on 11 employee positions which are currently vacant and also anticipates that 10 more will be frozen in the upcoming budget year as employees leave and are not replaced.

Excluded from the hiring freeze are the police and fire departments. They account for almost two-thirds of the employees and expenses in the General Fund.

Property taxes provide about 30% of General Fund revenues and nearly 14% of overall revenues to the City. Other sources of revenue include municipal franchise fees, utility taxes, license and permit fees, interest income, portions of gasoline and sales taxes, and grants from state and federal agencies.

Budget Funds Diverse Programs

The budget also includes two funds that receive revenue directly from customers.

A \$50.4-million Water and Sewer Fund receives revenue from utility customer payments. It supports the operation of water production and distribution systems as well as two water reclamation plants, a wastewater collection system, and a reclaimed water distribution system.

Water and sewer projects account for nearly three-quarters of the \$24.8-million proposed as a capital improvement fund in the new budget.

A \$2.97-million budget proposed for operation of Melbourne's two golf courses receives funds from payments by golfers.

Other major budget areas include:

Budget Public Hearings

- Sept. 16, 6:30 p.m.
- Sept. 30, 6:30 p.m.

• About \$1.48-million from state and federal grants that will fund housing and community improvement programs.

• A budget of \$1.3-million for the City stormwater program, an assessment-funded effort to reduce flood risks and comply with federal environmental mandates.

• About \$2.2-million to support programs for the City's three redevelopment areas to improve neighborhoods and the business climate.

The City budget proposal does not yet include the proposed \$114-million Melbourne International Airport budget, which is first separately approved by the Airport Authority then forwarded to the City Council for adoption during the public hearings.

Community Invited to Hearings

The public is invited to participate in both budget hearings at City Hall.

At the first hearing, a tentative budget and proposed millage rate will be adopted. At the second public hearing, final action is taken to formally adopt the millage rate and budget.

The budget document is available for inspection at the City Clerk's Office.

Voters will select two members of City Council in Nov. 4 election

On Nov. 4, voters in the City of Melbourne will be asked to select two City Council members for four-year terms. Council members from districts one and three are to be elected by citywide vote.

Candidates who will take office without opposition in the election are incumbent Mayor Harry C. Goode, Jr., 101 E. Melbourne Avenue, and District Five resident Molly Tasker, 1557 Sienna Drive. The District 5 seat is held by Cheryl Palmer, who is to leave the post after 10 years of service.

District One candidates are Mike Nowlin, 313 Live Oak Lane, and Tamara Sandberg, 2983 St. Helen's Way. The District 1 seat is currently held by Richard Contreras, who is to leave the post after serving two terms.

District Three candidates are incumbent Kathy Meehan, 1310 E. Prospect Avenue; Merrill Robertson, 2949 Lawrence Drive; and Pat Poole, 805 E. Palmetto Avenue.



Bikes Help Save Fuel

Training of additional officers in the use of bicycles in law enforcement activities has been scheduled by the Melbourne Police Department as part of a program to conserve fuel.

Pictured are Sgt. Byron Barnes (at left), a veteran cyclist who will be conducting the training, and Office Jim Sargeant, who regularly uses a bicycle in patrols of the historic downtown area along New Haven Avenue.

The department has several bicycles that have been used over the years in special operations. Officers can benefit from the flexibility and potential stealth of bicycle patrols.

City board member applicants are encouraged

Applications are being accepted from residents who would like to serve as volunteers on City boards, devoting time to decision-making processes that are critical to the community.

"The citizens who serve on the City boards have a voice in their city government and they provide an important service for the community," said City Clerk Cathy Wysor.

Some 147 volunteers currently serve on 19 boards and committees, most of them in an advisory capacity to provide recommendations to the City Council. Members of five of the boards sit as community judges.

"We encourage residents to submit applications for board positions so they can be considered when the City Council makes new appointments," said Wysor.

The application form is available at the City's web site along with additional information about boards and lists of current

DOWNLOAD an application form at Melbourne's web site: melbourneflorida.org/forms/pdf-forms/app-brd.pdf

board members.

The web site information can be accessed at melbourneflorida.org/meet. Applications can be returned to the City Clerk at City Hall, 900 E. Strawbridge Ave., Melbourne, FL 32901, or submitted by fax to 953-6289.

Most boards meet monthly. Preparation for a meeting takes one to three hours for a typical board member, Wysor said. Appointments are usually for three-year terms.

Each new board member participates in an orientation session with City staff members and some boards require additional training.

Some boards have special requirements for potential members. Details are available from the City Clerk's Office at 953-6225.

Board members honored

A number of the citizens who serve as volunteer members of City boards are to be honored during an annual ceremony. The board members are honored at five-year intervals and some have served for extended periods.

The longest-serving board member is Charles Jackson, who has been a member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment for more than 32 years.

Those being saluted this year include Shanna Tibbets, Architectural Review Board, 5 years; Clayton Bennett, 5 years, and Cris Patterson, 10 years, Building Board of Adjustment and Appeals; Tom Flamm and Marty Rethwisch, 5 years, Firefighters' Pension Plan Board of Trustees; Penny Goode, 5 years, Golf Courses Advisory Board (with previous experience on the Planning and Zoning Board); Joan Madden, 5 years, Melbourne Housing Authority; Bobby Bechtel, 5 years, Olde Eau Gallie Riverfront Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee; Donald Laird, 15 years, Planning and Zoning Board; and Mike Nowlin, 10 years, Zoning Board of Adjustment.



The PLANNING & ZONING BOARD acts in advisory capacity to the City Council on questions relating to zoning, comprehensive planning, and land use. Members include, pictured from left, Shane Norcross, Ed Coruzzi (seated), Noel Droor, Alan King (chairman), Loretta Goggin (representing the Brevard County School Board), alternate member Bruce Waters (seated), and Nat Clement. Not pictured are Donald Laird, Glen Outlaw (vice chairman), and alternate member Kathy Chambers.

Community contributions fund the Independence Day fireworks

Contributions to the Melbourne Community Fireworks Fund provided the \$11,000 cost of the fireworks display on Independence Day over the Indian River Lagoon. Contributions also supported the July 4 parade through Historic Downtown Melbourne.

Contributors not listed in a previous newsletter include Ascension Catholic Church, providing \$100. In the individual and family contributor category, not previously listed were Theresa Bryant and Kathleen Spatenga & Lori Spatenga-Newman.

Co-sponsors for the fireworks fund included Certified General Contractors, sponsoring the celebration with a \$2,000 contribution. Co-sponsors providing \$1,000 include Brevard County Parks & Recreation; Harris Sanitation - a Waste Management Company; Health First Health Plans; and the Melbourne Greyhound Park.

Co-sponsors providing \$500 include Harry & Wendy Brandon; Bright House Networks; Coastal Mitsubishi/Coastal Hyundai; Dean, Ringers, Morgan & Lawton, P.A.; Florida Today Newspaper; Frazier Engineering; Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson, P.A.; Northrop Grumman Integrated Systems; Public Financial Management, Inc.; RJP Development Company; Weller Pools, LLC; and the City of West Melbourne.

Fire Prevention Week focuses on avoiding hazards in homes

"It's Fire Prevention Week: Prevent Home Fires!" That theme for the upcoming Fire Prevention Week is a blunt reminder of how frequently fire breaks out in living areas, a problem that Melbourne officials say is avoidable.

"There are number of steps that are easy to take but are very important in preventing home fires,"

notes Angel Conde, the City's Deputy Fire Official. "Just a little extra caution can prevent the leading causes of home fires.

"The problems are usually related to unattended cooking, improper use of portable heaters, and overloaded electrical receptacles."

Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 5-11, a time when fire prevention information

traditionally reaches students. However, Conde explains that adults can best implement several safety measures including:

- ❑ The use of smoke detectors near every sleeping area, with regular battery checks.
- ❑ Regular cleaning of clothes dryer vent hoses to prevent lint build-up.
- ❑ The removal of any material stored near water heaters.
- ❑ Never allowing anything being cooked to be left unattended.
- ❑ Ensuring that lighters are never where children can access them.

"A few preventative measures can make your home much safer," Conde said, "but if we don't take the time to regularly check for fire hazards there is going to be a potential for danger."

More fire prevention information is available at the City web site (melbourneflorida.org/fire).



Program allowing mixing of materials for recycling is followed by increase in collection rate

More solid waste material is being recycled by Melbourne residents than ever before, in part due to increasing familiarity with a 'single stream' program for collections.

In June 2006, Melbourne began a new recycling program. Instead of separating recycling commodities into different bins, homeowners could mix different types of items in collection bins.

"Along with easier recycling, consumers were given an opportunity to place a wider variety of items out for collection," explained Jennifer Wilster, the City's Environmental Community Outreach Manager.

The list of items for recycling now includes newspapers; plastic and glass bottles; aluminum, steel and tin cans; magazines; phone books; junk mail; paper bags; milk and juice cartons; and paperboard boxes

including those which held cereal or other food products or a 12-pack of drinks.

Wilster said collection records indicate that 2,825 tons of solid waste was collected for recycling in the first year of the single stream program, and in the following year that total jumped to 3,697 tons.

"The comparison of the collection rates shows us that participation is increasing, which was one goal of the new program," Wilster said.

She explained that the collection and processing system employed by Waste Management allows for the separation of various types of solid waste. Waste Management collects solid waste for recycling under contract to the City.

The company delivers the mixed items to a Melbourne company called SP Recycling. That company then trucks the material to a commercial operation called Recycle America, which operates a large materials recovery center in Orlando.

At the Orlando location the material

is sorted using both manual and optical systems.

"Once the sorting is completed, the various types of solids become commodities that are delivered to various end users," Wilster said.

More information about Melbourne's recycling program is available at the municipal web site (melbourneflorida.org/solid).

Collection Schedules

Mainland: Mainland garbage is collected on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Material for recycling is collected on Tuesdays or Fridays depending on your location. Call the recycling hotline at (321) 953-6302 for your recycle day.

Mainland yard trash is collected on Mondays.

Beachside: Beachside garbage is collected on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Material for recycling is collected on Thursdays. Beachside yard trash is collected on Thursdays.

Improvement Projects

The City of Melbourne is pursuing listed improvement projects to maintain and improve services to the community.

Under construction:

- Booker T. Washington neighborhood lighting improvements, \$96,706.
- City Hall replacement, \$8.7-million, and downtown parking garage, \$5.7-million.
- Crane Creek Reserve Golf Course drainage improvements, \$48,745.
- Grant Street Water Reclamation Facility administrative building, \$434,434.
- Lift Station 43 & 55 replacements, \$699,835.
- Lorna Drive drainage improvements, \$128,497.
- Mallard's Landing Golf Course tee box renovations, \$108,684.
- Surface water treatment plant improvements, Phase II, \$11.3 million.

Under design or ready to bid:

- Apollo Blvd./Fee Ave. stormwater treatment pond.
- Babcock St./Brevard Dr. intersection improvements.
- Babcock St. / NASA Blvd. intersection improvements.
- Babcock Street realignment Phase 2.
- Charles Drive stormwater pond.
- Decorative City entrance features, north and south, along Highway U.S. 1.
- Hickory Ditch stabilization.
- Lipscomb Park improvements Phase 2.
- Southgate Blvd. french drains.
- Strawbridge Avenue streetscaping.
- Trickling filter upgrade at Grant Street Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Water distribution master plan improvements.

For more information contact Rory Dittmer, Design Supervisor, 953-6344.

Development Projects in the City of Melbourne

CONSTRUCTION COMPLETED:

- ABR Realty parking lot, 309 Audubon Drive.
- 1514 Airport Blvd., commercial building.
- Coastal Mechanical Services, 370 East Dr.
- Deratany Office Building, 300 S. Babcock St., commercial.
- DRL Warehouse, 4011 Digital Light Dr.
- Florida Tech student housing buildings, 150 W. University Blvd.
- Gray Robinson Office Building, 1795 W. NASA Blvd.
- Kennedy Square subdivision, Southland Ave. & Masterson St., 10 residential units.
- Larson LLC, 175 West Dr., commercial.
- Northrop Grumman Building 226-100, 1801 Grumman Place, commercial.
- Powers Art Center, 1512 Guava Ave., art studio.
- Starbucks Store / Crossings at Baymeadows, 3660 N. Wickham Rd.
- Sunshine Dodge, 840 S. Harbor City Blvd., redevelopment, and fire line installation.
- West Drive Commercial Complex, 185 West Dr., commercial.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION:

- Crossroads Village Lot 7, east of Wickham Rd./Pineda Causeway, commercial.
- Crossings at Bay Meadows, Grand Meadows Blvd./Wickham Rd., multi-family residential.
- Durham Building addition, 1947 N. Harbor City Blvd., commercial.
- First Baptist Church of South Brevard, 4300 N. Wickham Rd.
- Harbor Edge Condominium, 1211 E. New Haven, residential.
- Hidden Oaks Condominium, 905 Twisting

Branch Court, residential.

- Holmes Regional Medical Center parking lot, southeast corner of Medical Park Dr. and Hibiscus Blvd.
- Kindred Health Care acute care facility, 765 W. NASA Blvd.
- Lansing Square, 2255 N. Wickham Rd., bank, retail mini-storage.
- Mavrelis Building, 300 W. New Haven Ave., 3-story commercial/residential building.
- MIMA of Melbourne Phase I & 2 office buildings, 1223 Gateway Dr.
- Palmwood Subdivision Phase 2, end of Elena Way, 29 single-family lots.
- Prestige AB Ready Mix, 2585 Avocado Ave., commercial facilities.
- Ryanwood Condominiums, Post Rd./Croton Rd., residential.
- South Crane Creek mixed use Phase 1, 2222 S. Harbor City Blvd., commercial.
- Stack Crossings, 1505 Palm Bay Rd., retail/mini-storage building.
- Wickham Park senior center Phase II.

APPROVED FOR CONSTRUCTION:

- Baer Air Hanger, 150 S. Apollo Blvd., private hanger and office.
- Eau Gallie Office Complex, 2010, 2020, 2030 W. Eau Gallie Blvd, office buildings.
- HCT parking lot, 40 Circle Ave.
- National City Bank, 5535 N. Wickham Rd., bank building.
- Sheltair Hangers, Parcel F, General Aviation Dr., hanger.

For information about listed projects contact the City of Melbourne Engineering Department at 953-6361.

Contacting the City Council

- **Mayor Harry Goode**, 953-6255; cityhall@melbourneflorida.org
- **Richard Contreras**, District 1, 242-6350; cityhall@melbourneflorida.org
- **Mark LaRusso**, District 2, 779-8505; cityhall@melbourneflorida.org
- **Vice Mayor Kathy Meehan**, District 3, 984-7588; cityhall@melbourneflorida.org
- **John Thomas**, District 4, 508-6738; johnthomas@melbourneflorida.org
- **Cheryl Palmer**, District 5, 242-2009; cityhall@melbourneflorida.org
- **Joanne Corby**, District 6, 259-4210; joanne@councilwomancorby.com

E-mail received by the City of Melbourne is considered to be public record.

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State funding allows Melbourne to provide assistance with protective shutters

Financial assistance to help pay for the installation of hurricane shutters still awaits many Melbourne residents if homeowners have received state-approved wind surveys. Already, the owners of more than two dozen homes have been assisted.

Some homeowners already in the program are finding that they are qualified for other aid to help secure their homes.

“Several families in need have contacted us because of the shutter program and had no idea that Melbourne offered a home rehabilitation program,” explains Sueann Thomaston, the City’s grants administrator. “It turned out that they were perfect candidates for a rehabilitation program to repair their homes.”

Thomaston said that while the shutter program is designed to benefit homeowners in all income categories, the City welcomes the opportunity to help those participants who qualify for other programs. “It really has been a win-win program so far.”

Melbourne’s Housing and Community Development Department each year channels state and federal grant funds into community improvement programs, many aimed at meeting the housing needs of low-income residents.

The shutter program is a one-time effort to encourage homeowners of all income categories to protect their homes from storm damage.

Residents and owners of homes in Melbourne whose property has been the subject of a wind inspection under the My Safe Florida Home (MSFH) program may be eligible for up to \$5,000 in assistance to make the structures more hurricane resistant.

The City of Melbourne has qualified for the distribution of up to \$500,000 in state funds to property owners who qualify for

the program.

“The funding comes from a competitive grant program that provides funds to local governments to help Floridians harden their homes to reduce wind damage,” said Melinda Thomas, the City’s Housing and Community Development Director.

Thomas explained that those receiving assistance must use it to strengthen single-family residential structures that are occupied by owners. State-funded wind inspection reports document the work that can protect homes. Improvements could include windows, doors, garage doors, and roof bracing.

“The City has designed a plan that allows us to offer MSFH funding to serve all income levels,” Thomas said.

She explained that property owners in higher income categories will be asked to match the state funds on a dollar-for-dollar basis, while some in lower income categories would not pay anything because matching funds will be provided from the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program. Up to \$120,000 in SHIP funding is available for this purpose.

Thomas said applications are being accepted from homeowners who have already received the state’s free wind inspection report and are ready to move forward with implementation of improvements to prevent storm damage.

Her department has mailed notification letters to owners of properties where the state-

funded inspections have been completed. Additional information is available from the Housing and Community Development Department at 674-5734.



PROTECTIVE SHUTTERS to prevent wind damage from tropical storms were installed at the home of John and Lynn Warren with the assistance of a state grant program. Pictured with them is Tina LaFayette, who is coordinating the program for the City.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Local governments assist residents in obtaining current information during emergency periods.

Brevard County works with state and federal agencies in arranging relief activities and provides information through the 211 telephone service, which is supported by Melbourne. The county posts information on the web at brevardcounty.us/EOC/news.cfm.

The City offers emergency advisories via e-mail, at the municipal web site, and with ‘CodeRED’ telephone messages. For information visit the web site at melbourneflorida.org or call the Public Information Office at 953-6282.