

**BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Southwest Ranches, Florida**

Thursday 7:00 PM

August 13, 2024

13400 Griffin Road

Present:

Mayor Steve Breitkreuz

Russell Muñiz, Town Administrator

Vice Mayor David S. Kuczenski

Russell Muniz, Assistant Town Administrator/Town Clerk

Council Member Jim Allbritton

Emil C. Lopez, Town Financial Administrator

Council Member Bob Hartmann

Keith Poliakoff, Town Attorney

Council Member Gary Jablonski

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Workshop of the Town Council of Southwest Ranches was held at 13400 Griffin Road in the Southwest Ranches Council Chambers. The meeting, having been properly noticed, was called to order by Mayor Breitkreuz at 7:02 PM. Attendance was noted by roll call and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Presentation – Proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget**

Mayor Breitkreuz thanked members of the public for attending and stated that the Budget Workshop was a crucial part of the budgeting process. He thanked members of the Town staff for their hard work during the process and turned the meeting over to Town Administrator Muñiz.

Town Administrator Muñiz stated that the budget presentation was a culmination of the efforts of Town staff and the Town Council. He said he was proud of the work performed by Town staff and thanked Town Financial Administrator Lopez, Town Controller Rich Strum, Town Accountant Arianna Durbeej, and Town Procurement Officer Christina Semeraro for their work on the budget. He said he was proud to present a budget with no increase in millage, fire assessment fees, or solid waste fees, while increasing levels of services in many areas such as road resurfacing projects and parks maintenance. He then turned the meeting over to Town Financial Administrator Lopez for the presentation.

Town Financial Administrator Lopez and Town Controller Rich Strum presented the PowerPoint presentation summarizing the proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget.

Mayor Breitkreuz thanked Town Financial Administrator Lopez for the presentation and stated that it was great work by Town staff to increase services to the residents while keeping the millage and assessment fees the same.

Council Member Hartmann thanked Town Financial Administrator Lopez and the Finance Department for their efforts to keep the assessment fees the same while increasing services to the residents.

Mayor Breitkreuz discussed a proposal sent to him regarding home composting around the Town and said that he would like to research it further. He stated there were some issues that would need to be addressed but he would like to do the program on a small scale for one year to work through the process and get it correct before fully starting a program. He said the pilot program

would be for 100 homes and cost the Town approximately \$2,400 a month. Council Member Hartmann stated his support for the project and asked where the funding would come from and if the project be for the upcoming fiscal year or next. Mayor Breitkreuz stated that he would like to have the Finance Department research the costs further and decide where the funds should be taken from. Council Member Jablonski expressed his support and agreed that it would be best for the Finance Department to decide where the funds should be taken from.

Council Member Jablonski stated that the Town should change the proposed Project Manager position to an Assistant Town Administrator position. He spoke about Town Administrator Muñiz needing a person to be able to step into his position at a moment's notice when he is not available. Mayor Breitkreuz agreed that the position was needed and asked Town Administrator Muñiz for his input on the matter.

Town Administrator Muñiz thanked Council Member Jablonski for bringing the matter before the Town Council and stated that he had been developing the criteria for the Assistant Town Administrator position over the last eight months and felt that the Project Manager position could be changed an Assistant Town Administrator position at the direction of the Town Council.

Mayor Breitkreuz stated that he supported creating the position. Council Member Hartmann said that he thought it was a great idea. Vice Mayor Kuczenski stated that he supported the idea if the position could be funded while staying at the 3.900 millage rate. Council Member Allbritton agreed that the position should be created as long as the funds could be found while staying under the set 3.900 millage rate.

Town Administrator Muñiz stated that the Town Administration would work on changing the job description from Project Manager to Assistant Town Administrator and said the salary range would be kept in line with the salaries of equivalent positions in the tri-county area.

Mayor Breitkreuz opened the floor for public comment.

Mayor Breitkreuz asked Town Financial Administrator Lopez to address the concerns raised regarding the breakout of the PROs expenditures. Town Financial Administrator Lopez stated he could have it prepared by next week. Town Administrator Muñiz explained the reasoning of having expenditures grouped instead of listed as individual line items in the budget.

Mayor Breitkreuz discussed the zero-waste initiative not being the same as zero cost. He stated that eventually the costs would hopefully offset with the true up and true down with WM, but there would be an initial expense with the implementation of the program.

Council Member Hartmann suggested the Zero Waste Advisory Board start devising a plan on how the Town should move forward with the zero-waste program and make suggestions to the Town Council for next fiscal year.

Mayor Breitreuz agreed the best course of action would be for the Advisory Board to devise strategies on how to address the issue and request the Town Council for approval and funding.

Council Member Jablonski advised that the fastest course of action for the Town to move towards zero-waste is education on proper recycling and other methods to move the Town towards zero-waste.

Mayor Breitreuz asked Town Administrator Muñiz to address the question regarding the agricultural liaison position and asked if the position was budgeted in fiscal year 2025.

Town Administrator Muñiz answered that the position was not budgeted in the fiscal year 2025 budget. He stated that Town Administration planned to ask the Town Council for guidance during the Workshop meeting and that the position could easily be added to the budget and stay under the millage rate because if it was a part-time position.

Council Member Hartmann raised the concern that there might not be enough work necessary to justify the position. He stated the position seemed demand driven now but may end up having other additional responsibilities assigned to it because there was not enough work regarding agriculture.

Council Member Jablonski asked Town Administrator Muñiz about the Agricultural Liaison from the Broward County Property Appraiser's Office and the site visits to Town Hall.

Town Administrator Muñiz stated that the Broward County Property Appraiser's Office sends an Agricultural Liaison to meet with the residents the first Tuesday of the month. He discussed the services provided by the Broward County Property Appraiser's Office when visiting the Town and who can benefit from their visits.

Mayor Breitreuz stated that the additional support from the Broward County Property Appraiser's office was appreciated but said that he felt the Town still needed a part-time person to make sure the Town's residents' needs were addressed. He discussed having the agricultural position being added to an existing employee's responsibilities but felt that the Town Council was not comfortable with that idea. He said he was comfortable hiring someone for a part time position but was not comfortable with a full-time position.

Town Administrator Muñiz discussed that the original idea was to turn a current part-time position full-time position with the added agricultural responsibilities. He stated that the Town Administration would follow the instruction of the Town Council and create the position as a separate part-time position.

Town Administrator Muñiz clarified for the record that the Assistant Town Administrator salary would be estimated at approximately \$160,000. He asked for guidance from the Town Council on budgeting for additional License Plate Reader cameras. He stated that the Town Council has

previously used unassigned funds to pay for the LPRs at the Town Council’s direction. He said that only two cameras were needed instead of four and those would be located on Griffin Road and Dykes Road as well as Griffin Road and 148th Avenue.

Council Member Jablonski reminded the Town Council that all the funding for the LPR camera program has been taken from the forfeiture funds.

Town Financial Administrator Lopez addressed the question asked during Public Comment regarding the Fire Assessment fees and explained how those were calculated.

Vice Mayor Kuczenski suggested that the Town research adding additional police officers to the budget next fiscal year.

Council Member Jablonski advised the Town Council that Rolling Oaks does not need additional speed poles allocated to him for this fiscal year, and that he is giving the speed poles to the other Council Members to place in their districts around Town.

Town Administrator Muñiz thanked the Town Council for adding the Assistant Town Administrator position to the budget and stated that it would be a great help to him personally and benefit the Town as well. He thanked the Town Finance team for making the budget process smooth and seamless this year and commended them for their hard work.

Mayor Breitkreuz thanked everyone for their work on the budget and thanked residents for attending the meeting. He advised the next budget meeting would be September 12, 2024.

**4. Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted:*

  
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*Debra M. Ruesga, CMC, Town Clerk*

*Adopted by the Town Council on this 24th day of October, 2024.*

  
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*Steve Breitkreuz, Mayor*

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OF THE PROCEEDINGS, AND THAT FOR SUCH PURPOSE, THE AFFECTED PERSON MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDING IS MADE, WHICH RECORD INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED THIS NOTICE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE CONSENT BY THE TOWN FOR THE INTRODUCTION OR ADMISSION OF OTHERWISE INADMISSIBLE OR IRRELEVANT EVIDENCE, NOR DOES IT AUTHORIZE CHALLENGES OR APPEALS NOT OTHERWISE ALLOWED BY LAW.