

July 21 and July 22 Council Meetings

On July 21 the council had a special call meeting to discuss the possibility of submitting an offer to purchase the Walgreen's property where Island Silver and Spice was located – in the heart of downtown Islamorada.

There was discussion about the logic behind the purchase, concentrating on the opportunity for the community to control the future of this prime location.

The Council voted 5-0 to give the Village manager and Village attorney the task of negotiating with Walgreens.

July 22 was the regular meeting of the Village Council.

Presentations:

- A. IEMO presentation to Councilmen Gregg and Bacheler for completing a course for new members of city councils.



- B. Lobster Mini season presentation by Andy Newman for TDC



TDC appears to be making a very serious effort to get the word out about the rules and regulations regarding lobstering in the Keys. [Click here](#)

- c. Presentation of Oct 2019- Sep 2020 financial report (CAFR) – [click here](#) to see last year’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Audit (CAFR) available in the Village website – entire report is 139 pages long. Amazing to page through it and see the huge amount of effort that goes into municipal financing efforts. Our Finance Director, Maria Bassett, should be congratulated for being able to accomplish this tremendous workload while also acting manager over much of the last year.

Citizens’ Advisory Committee updates

- A. Achievable Housing, by Rebekah Susa

The Committee recommended the Council consider increasing the annual fee for Vacation Rentals, by resolution, as provided in the Affordable Housing ordinance.

Explained numerous projects being discussed by committee. [Click here](#) to see report

Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes June 10 and July 1 Council meetings
- B. Accept Audit Report

End of Consent Agenda

Quasi-Judicial –

Change to Future Land Use Map from Residential Conservation to Mixed Use and Zoning Map from Native Residential to Highway Commercial for a property owned by Mike Murphy between U.S. One and the Old Highway on Plantation Key.

Because the notice of this hearing was questioned, there were errors in the staff presentation, and some documentation was not provided until the day before the hearing, the council voted to delay the hearing until a future date.

Future Land Use Map and zoning map change for the property behind the Banyan Tree retail store at MM81.2. Property, owned by Andres Hopman, is residential and the owner requested a change to commercial as it is to be used for parking for the Banyan Tree.

Council voted 5-0 to approve on first reading.

Waste Management trash collection for commercial customers (including most condos). Waste Management bought out Advance Disposal, and the contract with Islamorada, last year and has asked the Village to increase the commercial collection rate by 7%, allow them to begin pick up at 5 am instead of 7 am, and use a different Consumer Price Index (CPI) specifically for the waste businesses.

The Village Council believed that Waste Management should live with the contract they bought when they acquired Advance Disposal except they did agree that the start time could be 6 am instead of the requested 5 am.

The Waste Management contract ends 12/31/2023. It does call for an annual adjustment based on the CPI or 3% whichever is lower. This year the rate will increase 3%. CPI was up 5.1%.

Determining the millage rate for the Trim notices for upcoming fiscal year

The staff is recommended that council set the **millage rate at 3.015 or lower** for the Trim notices. This amount could then be decreased but not increased during budget hearings.

- 3.015 is the millage rate we paid in 2020-2021 based on assessed values last year.
- 2.849 is the projected “roll-back” millage rate that would provide approximately the same revenue in ad valorem taxes as we received this year.

- Property values in Islamorada increased by over \$232 million or 5.83% in the last year to \$4.22 billion.
- Our fund balance as of September 30, 2021 is projected to be \$8,816,771, and increase of \$1,239,830
- With total expenditures for year ending September 30, 2021 estimated at \$15,739,475 our **fund balance will be 56%** of our annual expenses.

The Council voted 5-0 to approve a millage rate of 3.015 with expectation that it can be lowered during budget hearings set for September 3 and September 14.

Setting rate for 2021-2022 solid waste.

The council voted 5-0 to set the Solid Waste (trash collection) assessment for residential properties at \$455.65, the same rate it was the last several years. This assessment is collected via your property tax bill.

Freebee: creating and using parking spaces at Village Hall for charging station. Four parking spaces will be located behind Village Hall, near U.S. One. Our contract with them requires that we provide a location for the charging station, but they pay the cost.

Code Compliance amnesty for sewer hook-up.

There are currently 27 homes not yet hooked up to the central sewer. The Council voted 5-0 to allow the Village Manager to attempt to personally contact each property owner to encourage them to connect. He will provide a report at the October 14 council meeting and any property owner making an effort to comply will be given until Dec 31, 2021 to take advantage of the amnesty program, reducing the ongoing fines to 2% for residential and 3% for commercial. Most of the fines accruing are between \$200,000 and \$500,000 without the amnesty program.

Zoom meetings

Public: the council agreed that the public should be able to participate via zoom

Council: Initially they were split on whether members of council should be able to participate via zoom with Gregg and Bacheler believing council members should not be allowed to participate remotely.

Eventually there was agreement that one council member only should be allowed to attend remotely for any meeting. A council member can do this no more than twice a year. It will be up to the member of council himself to decide if his circumstances are extenuating circumstances.

A “live” quorum must be met.

A council member cannot vote on a quasi judicial agenda item remotely.

The person chairing the meeting must be present live.

LPA – same as council

Other Citizen Committees –

- a. Chair should be present
- b. Quorum live
- c. No limits on number of meetings attended remotely.

DOG PARK at Founders Park

Council voted 5-0 to approve a TDC grant of approximately \$200,000 to pay for significant improvements to the dog park.