

**MINUTES OF THE JULY 26, 2016 SPECIAL SESSION  
GREEN COVE SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL**

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**Call to Order**

A duly called Special Session of the Green Cove Springs City Council was called to order Tuesday, July 26, 2016, at 7:02 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 321 Walnut Street, Green Cove Springs, Florida.

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

The invocation was given by Mayor Lewis followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**Roll Call**

**Council Members Present:**

Constance W. Butler  
Steven R. Kelley  
B. Van Royal  
Roy M. Timberlake, Jr., Vice Mayor  
Pamela J. Lewis, Mayor

**Staff Members Present:**

L. J. Arnold, III, City Attorney  
Julia W. Clevinger, City Clerk  
Janis Fleet, Development Services Director  
Marlena Guthrie, Finance Director  
Danielle J. Judd, City Manager  
Robert Musco, Chief of Police  
Mike Null, Asst. City Mgr. / Public Works Dir.  
Ann Schulte, Personnel Director

**Mayor to call on members of the audience wishing to address  
the Council on matters not on the Agenda.**

There were none.

**COUNCIL BUSINESS**

**1. Establish tentative millage rate for Fiscal Year 2016/2017. Guthrie / Judd**

Discussion ensued with the City Council regarding the establishment of a tentative millage rate for Fiscal Year 2016/2017 as presented by Ms. Guthrie and Ms. Judd.

Vice Mayor Timberlake clarified that the City Council was not setting the Budget at this meeting, only a tentative millage rate and the Public Hearings.

In response to Council Member Butler's inquiry, Ms. Judd explained that any exemptions for seniors would be based on their level of income.

Council Member Royal felt the impact would not be 7.8% on everyone's tax bills but that some would go up 20%. There were some new and some commercial would be even higher and residential was locked in at 3%. He thought that a millage rate at 7.8% was a good bit and would not be proposing the roll back rate because the Council could discuss it at the workshops.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER ROYAL TO APPROVE 3.6000 MILLS, WHICH IS THE CURRENT RATE WHICH WILL INCLUDE NOW THE 7.8% INCREASE, AS THE TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016/2017, SET SEPTEMBER 6 AT 7:00 P.M. AS THE FIRST PUBLIC HEARING ON THE MILLAGE, BUDGET, AND CIP, AND SET SEPTEMBER 20 AT 7:00 P.M. AS THE SECOND AND FINAL PUBLIC HEARING ON THE MILLAGE, BUDGET, AND CIP. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER KELLEY.

Under discussion of the motion, Vice Mayor Timberlake stated he did not disagree with 3.6000; however, there were things not in the budget that he would like to see the Council discuss. He would prefer to see a tentative millage rate set at 3.9107 to allow the City Council some flexibility. He believed it created an undue burden and was ill-advised to arbitrarily set the Council without leaving any wiggle room. This would tie the City Council's hands and not afford the opportunity to consider or discuss any items that may not be in the proposed Budget. He could not vote for setting the tentative millage rate at 3.6000. He felt it was shortsighted in the way they approached the budget. In addition, he agreed with the need for constraint but felt the \$100,000 difference between the 3.6000 and 3.9107 rates was small in comparison to the size of the budget.

Council Member Royal disagreed stating that he felt restraint was a good thing as it would help keep the Council in check regarding possible overspending. He pointed out the substantial increase in residential and commercial growth in the City, the rate increases for electric, water and wastewater, and the refinancing of the Police Station as reasons that additional funds were not warranted in setting a higher millage rate. He also did not see anyone receiving 4 and 5% raises unless they were doing well in the stock market. He further believed that the message should go out from the City that the 3.6000 mills was enough for the City to operate on.

Although Mayor Lewis agreed with all the comments, she did not want to see the increased rate. She believed in a fee-based structure pointing to the Water and Wastewater rates versus property taxes. She was in agreement with setting the tentative rate at 3.6000.

Ms. Judd explained the following as to what was driving the millage rate:

- There were \$356,000 in increases in the General Fund;
- The Contingency and Contribution to Reserve balances;
- No merit increases or COLAs were included;
- The \$300,000 from the BOCC was programmed in as General Fund Revenues; if it did not materialize, it would have to come from Surtax or the General Fund;

- The Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) in Electric had been rolled down to \$50,000;
- The last debt payment of \$220,000 had come back to the Surtax side as a result of the refinancing of the Police Station;
- \$19 million of anticipated new construction was also built into the Budget;
- Funding for Parks and Recreation; and
- Funding for additional pool operations and staffing.

She further reviewed the increments of the millage rates as noted in her Millage Dynamics chart. Ms. Judd also advised that she would further explain her reasons for the reclassifications of two (2) personnel classes and the wages, benefits, and staffing levels during the upcoming workshops.

Council Member Butler agreed with both points. She believed the constraints were needed but did not want to see the City Council lock themselves in at the lower rate.

Council Member Kelley also agreed with the comments. He was in support of the 3.6000 rate and he agreed the City should not be forced to go back and ask for more. He explained that he would like to see a tentative rate set somewhere in the middle such as 3.7000.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE FOLLOWING ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES – COUNCIL MEMBERS, STEVEN R. KELLEY, B. VAN ROYAL, AND PAMELA J. LEWIS, MAYOR. NAYS – CONSTANCE W. BUTLER AND ROY M. TIMBERLAKE, JR.

**2. City Manager and City Attorney Reports and/or Correspondence.**

The City Manager and City Attorney made comments regarding various city activities, events, operations, and projects.

**3. City Council Reports and/or Correspondence.**

The City Council made comments regarding various city activities, events, operations, and projects.

**4. Adjournment.**

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA

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Pamela J. Lewis, Mayor

Attest:

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Julia W. Clevinger, City Clerk