

**BUDGET HEARING  
LAKE HELEN CITY COMMISSION  
September 26, 2011  
7:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**A REGULAR MEETING** of the City Commission of the City of Lake Helen, Florida was called to order by Mayor Snowden at approximately 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Snowden, Commissioners Basso, Burton and Lane. Commissioner Robbins was absent. Also present were City Administrator Don Findell and City Clerk Nancy Wilson.

**Mayor Snowden** announced the passing of Ponce Inlet's Chief of Police.

The invocation was given and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Mayor Snowden**

**Commissioner Burton** read an announcement from the *Pearls* group formerly known as the *Daughters of Ebony Excellence*. The purpose of the group was read and the Commissioners were given an introduction to kickoff meeting.

**Mayor Snowden** announced the millage rate of 5.9780 mills, which is a .61% decrease over the roll back rate of 6.0237. **City Administrator Findell** explained the differences between the previous draft budget and the final budget. One difference was the early retirement of Chief Chester and the associated adjustment to Interim Chief Walker's salary.

*Consideration of Ordinance 2011-08 on second and final reading establishing the millage rate for Fiscal Year 2011/2012.*

**Mayor Snowden read the ordinance by title:**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAKE HELEN, FLORIDA, SETTING  
THE CITY OF LAKE HELEN MILLAGE RATE ON AD VALOREM TAXES  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011/2012.**

**The Public Hearing was opened for audience participation**

Mayor Snowden asked for audience participation and upon hearing no requests to comment **The Public Hearing was closed**

**City Administrator Findell said that**

Basso motion 2011-08/Burton  
All yes.

*Consideration of Ordinance 2011-09 on second and final reading appropriating funds for fiscal year 2011-2012*

**Mayor Snowden read the ordinance by title:**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAKE HELEN, FLORIDA,  
APPROPRIATING CERTAIN SUMS OF MONIES FOR THE USES  
AND PURPOSES SET FORTH FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER 1, 2011,  
THROUGH, AND INCLUDING, SEPTEMBER 30, 2012, (FY  
2011/2012).**

**The Public Hearing was opened for audience participation**

**City Administrator Findell** reported on wage adjustments he is proposing for City employees resulting from the loss in take home pay by those City employees who were required by the State legislature to contribute 3% of their wages for participation in the Florida Retirement Systems.

**Mayor Snowden** asked for audience participation and upon hearing no requests to comment **The Public Hearing was closed**

**Commissioner Basso** said that he wasn't adverse to a cost of living raise but he feels the reduction in state paid retirement is in line with the private sector. He also commented that employees should be given annual evaluations. If we have the money, he is in favor of a COLA or merit increase for employees. **City Administrator Findell** responded that there was a "change in the game". He explained that employees were employed with a quasi-contractual relationship with one set of rules one of which was that employees were not expected to contribute to their retirement accounts. Mr. Findell also gave an historical perspective on employee evaluations and on retirement contributions. **Commissioner Burton** added his perspective on rewarding employees vis-a-vis an increase in salary to compensate for the loss of the 3% contribution to their salaries and why he feels it's important. He feels the benefits far outweigh the financial impact.

**Commissioner Burton made a motion** to approve Ordinance 2011-09 with the 3% increase to offset the loss in retirement benefits plus an increase of 1% for both FRS and FMPTF employees effective the first full pay period in October  
**Commissioner Lane seconded**

**Commissioner Lane** commented that wages have gone down in the private sector. He also feels that regular employee evaluations are important. **Commissioner Burton** commented on the importance of recognizing employee excellence.

**Commissioner Burton, Commissioner Basso, Commissioner Lane and Mayor Snowden voted yes on this motion**

*Consideration of hiring Travis Sias as a Police Reserve effective September 26, 2011*

**Commissioner Lane made a motion** to hire Travis Sias pending the requisite clearances required for employment  
**Commissioner Burton seconded**

**Commissioner Burton, Commissioner Basso, Commissioner Lane and Mayor Snowden voted yes**

**Mayor Snowden** may have another candidate to fill a Reserve Police Officer position in the near future.

**Public Forum**

Lou Gutshall, chairman of the Home Tour Committee that operates under the League for Better Living Association asked:

- that the front of City Hall be cleaned and painted before the Christmas Home Tour
- that a cleaning fee be added to the Hopkins Hall rental for maintenance of the building
- that an update of a past contribution for a bathroom at Melissa Park by the League For Better Living be accounted for

**City Administrator Findell** said that we have money in the budget for the Melissa Park bathroom and it will be completed in the upcoming fiscal year. The cleaning fee for Hopkins Hall will be investigated. Finally, the City will do what it can to give the front of City Hall a facelift before the Christmas Home Tour.

**Commissioner Burton** discussed community service work that was performed in Lake Helen in recent weeks. He said that Lake Helen could be added to the list of potential work sites for those who need to perform community service. We would be able to block service by an offender we don't want working in Lake Helen.

**Commissioner Burton** also reported that the Fire Department on Main Street did not qualify for a street light by Volusia County.

**Commissioner Lane** commented on speed limits in Lake Helen.

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm**

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**Buddy Snowden, Mayor**

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**Nancy Wilson, City Clerk**