

NORTH FORT MYERS FIRE CONTROL AND RESCUE SERVICE  
DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

September 18, 2023  
2023-2024 Tentative Budget Hearing

Chairman Robert Hoke called the North Fort Myers Fire Control and Rescue Service District Board of Commissioners to order at 5:05 p.m.

**Present:**

Commissioners: Danny Ballard      Mike Gatewood  
                         Tom Mere              Robert Hoke

Chief Ronald Beecroft  
Assistant Chief of Training Eric Klos              Fire Marshal Rick Jones  
Office Manager Monique Brooks              Admin Specialist Emily Grgurich  
Public Education Officer Christi Fulton  
Union Representative Josh Ballard  
Via Computer Attorney Dirk Smits

**Absent:**      Commissioner Bill Schaible  
                 Assistant Chief John Manson

**Invocation:** Commissioner Mere

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Commissioner Gatewood

**Public Input:** Member of public in attendance but determined he was in wrong meeting and left.

**Announce and Adopt the 2023/2024 Millage Rate:**

**Commissioner Mere made a motion to accept Resolution 2023-002, which sets the proposed millage rate at 3.5 Mills, for fiscal year 2023-2024. Seconded by Commissioner Gatewood. There were no questions. The motion was put to vote, and the vote was 4-0. (1)**

## Presentation of 2023-2024 Tentative Budget:

Office Manager Brooks proceeded to go over the line items of the revenues and then the expenditures of the tentative 2023-2024 budget. (2)

Ballard –

- Was all overtime last year related to Hurricane Ian? No, but \$150,000 was the approximate amount of overtime due to Ian.
- Will we be putting \$33,000 per year into the VEBA? Yes. If the Actuarial were to come back with a different number, then would that have to be re-negotiated? No, because it is in the plan documents that the contribution is based on the current actuarial figure.
- Questioned the Grand Total number of Salaries is more than what we have in Salaries line item? Yes, because that is the grand total which includes overtime, social security taxes, workers compensation and retirement, but if you just look at the Regular column, that is where the salaries line amount comes from, not the grand total.
- Is the 40 hour employees raise included in the salary line item? Yes. What is the raise that 40 hour employees will receive this year? 4.5% the same as Negotiated for the Union. He disagrees with this. He would like it to be in writing to the Board. Discussion proceeded regarding the approval of the union contract versus the budget approval timing.
- With the number of hydrants increasing, shouldn't we increase that line item to be able to service them? At this time, we feel it will cover the cost of maintenance but can look at this next year as the number of hydrants continues to increase.
- Asked Training Chief Klos if the amount in training supplies is adequate considering we are hiring two more firefighters? Yes.
- What makes up the items in Firefighter Rescue Supplies? All medical supplies, hand tools, safety equipment for suppression personnel and any other items needed to do their job. If we are hiring two more firefighters, shouldn't that be increased? We feel it should be sufficient. He feels it should be increased because if we don't use the money we have it left over and we would not have to make an amendment.

Mere –

- Noted under Revenues that Suntrust Interest needed to be changed to Truist Interest
- Can the amount of the VEBA contribution increase or decrease? Yes, based on the current actuarial number.
- He feels confident in the presentation of the budget and if we need to do amendments, we will.

Hoke –

- What are Soft Tone Alerts? New tone alert system that slowly increases the sound instead of a loud jolt, which helps with heart rate issues. Commissioner Ballard asked if the Impact Fees would pay for all three stations? Yes, we are going to ask for funds for all three stations.
- Is the VEBA contribution being paid for by the District or the employees? District.
- Are we planning on hiring new employees? Two more. Is that included in the salaries? Yes.
- What does the Commercial Package cover? Liability Insurance.

**Commissioner Mere made a motion to accept Resolution 2023-003, which adopts the 2023-2024 Tentative budget, as presented, in the amount of \$27,813,780.00 Commissioner Gatewood seconded. There were no questions. The motion was put to vote, and the vote was 3-1 (Ballard Nay). (3)**

#### **Presentation of the Tentative 2023/2024 Impact Fee Budget:**

Office Manager Brooks presented the Tentative 2023/2024 Impact Fee Budget.

**Commissioner Gatewood made a motion to accept the Tentative 2023/2024 Impact Fee budget, in the amount of \$566,122.60, as presented. Commissioner Mere seconded. There were no questions, the motion was put to vote, all were in favor, and the decision was unanimous, the vote was 4-0. (4)**

**Commissioner Hoke noted that we would automatically move into the Regular Scheduled Monthly Commission Meeting.**

Tentative Budget Hearing adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Supportive Documents:

1. Resolution 2023-002
2. 2023/2024 Tentative Budget
3. Resolution 2023-003
4. 2023/2024 Tentative Impact Fee Budget