

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL  
Southwest Ranches, Florida**

Thursday 7:00 PM

August 22, 2024

13400 Griffin Road

Present:

Mayor Steve Breitkreuz

Russell Muñiz, Town Administrator

Vice Mayor David S. Kuczenski

Debra Ruesga, Town Clerk

Council Member Jim Allbritton

Emil C. Lopez, Town Financial Administrator

Council Member Bob Hartmann

Keith Poliakoff, Town Attorney

Council Member Gary Jablonski

A Regular Meeting 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 7:06 PM. Attendance was noted by roll call and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Quasi-Judicial Hearing**

**3. Resolution Approving Fields Ranches Plat**

A RESOLUTION AND FINAL ORDER OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES, FLORIDA, APPROVING APPLICATION NO. PL-66-23, FIELDS RANCHES PLAT, COMPRISING TWO LOTS ON 19.47 ACRES; GENERALLY LOCATED AT THE SOUTHEAST QUADRANT OF SW 172 AVENUE AT ITS INTERSECTION WITH SW 66 STREET (HUDSON DRIVE); AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, AND TOWN ATTORNEY TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE THE INTENT OF THIS RESOLUTION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The following motion was made by Council Member Jablonski and seconded by Council Member Hartmann and passed by a 5-0 roll call vote. The vote as follows: Council Members Allbritton, Hartmann, Jablonski, Vice Mayor Kuczenski, and Mayor Breitkreuz voting yes.

**MOTION: TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION.**

**4. Proclamation – Suicide Prevention Month – September**

The Town presented a proclamation that recognized September as Suicide Prevention Month.

**5. Presentation – Broward County Property Appraiser Marty Kiar**

Broward County Property Appraiser Marty Kiar spoke about the functions of the Property Appraiser's Office and how they assist the residents of Broward County, including the residents of the Town of Southwest Ranches. He discussed the Trim Notice that was recently mailed to residents and its importance. He asked all residents to review the notice thoroughly because it can affect their property taxes. He provided his contact information and advised the public to contact him and his office with any questions.

## **6. Public Comment**

The following members of the public addressed the Town Council: Carlos Cardoso, John Steven Garate, Marianne Allen.

## **7. Board Reports**

Debbie Green spoke on behalf of the Schools and Education Advisory Board. She discussed the new volunteer app Prime Volunteers, developed in part by the Sikh Youth Association. She stated that the Board is using the app for all student volunteers. She said the app can be downloaded from PrimeVolunteers.com and that there will be opportunities posted for volunteer hours.

Marianne Allen spoke as the Agricultural Liaison. She spoke about the importance of new residents joining their neighborhood organizations in the Town, and how that helps them become part of their community. She spoke about the importance of properly securing animals on properties and different requirements mandated by State law. She described events in the past about assisting with horses in distress and that the Town should consider a compensation program as part of the Agricultural Department being developed by the Town.

## **8. Council Member Comments**

Council Member Jablonski spoke about upcoming events within the Town such as the Calendar Photo Contest and the deadline of September 9<sup>th</sup> for submissions. He talked about the Broward County Property Appraiser Outreach Program at Town Hall happening the first Tuesday of every month and that the DMV Flow event will be August 28<sup>th</sup>. He stated that decals for the recycling bins are located at Town Hall and available for pick up if residents needed any additional decals. He stated that the Town Budget Hearings will be September 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, and asked Town Administrator Muñiz to address some elements of the budget during his comments. He discussed the Town's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event occurring in June of 2025, and said that many events are planned for the day and asked for residents to attend. He discussed having the Town Attorney draft an Ordinance to prevent the weaponization of Code Compliance with fraudulent code complaints. He said that he would like to pattern the ordinance after the False Alarm Ordinance. He discussed voter fraud that may be occurring in the Town regarding people using addresses of vacant lots to register to vote. He stated that the Town Administrator and the Town Attorney are working with the Broward County Property Appraiser's Office and the Broward Supervisor of Elections to find any suspected occurrences and if any are found they will be reported to the authorities.

Council Member Hartmann discussed the Trim Notice sent to residents by the Broward County Property Appraiser's Office. He said that the assessment fees and millage rate are the maximum amount that the Town would use for taxes. He stated that the Town is in the middle of the budget process but had to provide the rates to the County by late June so they County could provide it to the residents. He said the Town Council is keeping the millage rate at 3.9 and not raising the solid waste or fire assessment fees. He announced that the budget hearings will be September 12<sup>th</sup> and September 26<sup>th</sup>, and that the Town has third lowest millage rate in Broward County.

Vice Mayor Kuczenski stated that the 3.9 millage rate is the lowest rate for the Town in the last 15 years. He discussed the Rural Arts and Design Advisory Board developing design concepts for the entrance ways to the Southwest Meadows Sanctuary. He talked about the Halloween House Decorating Contest happening in October. He spoke about the Calendar Photo Contest and said that Town Employees will be able to submit photos for the contest. He stated that the Zero Waste Advisory Board is in the process of retaining a Zero Waste Consultant to help the Town move forward with the initiative. He discussed a post from State Representative Robin Bartleman announcing a meeting at Dr. Von D. Mizell-Eula Johnson State Park on August 27<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m., regarding the plans for development of hotels, golf courses, and pickle ball courts on State Park property. He asked everyone to attend the meeting to voice their opposition to developing the pristine lands of the state parks. He reiterated the dangers of title fraud mentioned by Broward County Property Appraiser Marty Kiar. He suggested that if residents see something suspicious to please report it. He discussed incidents of mail theft occurring in the Town and suggested residents purchase a locking mailbox as well as signing up for the US Postal Service Informed Delivery program that provides you with notifications on your mail delivery.

Council Member Allbritton spoke about locking mailboxes and that although they can still be broken into, they are a deterrent that can help prevent mail theft. He discussed the Broward County Emergency Management and US Small Business Administration loan program for the homeowners and business owners that were affected by the flooding that occurred during June 11<sup>th</sup> through June 14<sup>th</sup>. He reminded everyone that the deadline to apply was August 30<sup>th</sup>. He talked about the Proclamation for Suicide Prevention month and the statistics surrounding accidental deaths with firearms and encouraged everyone to secure their firearms properly. He spoke about the traffic enforcement program with police officers providing extra traffic enforcement on the Town's interior roads and the effect it has on slowing down traffic. He discussed the Aden Perry Project, its history, and the Town's involvement in the project. He said that the Broward League of Cities is reconvening after their summer hiatus and stated he would be meeting with the Mayors and Commissioners of other municipalities regarding the incinerator. He spoke about the Drainage and Infrastructure Board and their discussion regarding paving the streets around the Town and that he hoped the Town could dedicate extra money to road pavement this year.

Mayor Breitzkreuz spoke about the Town's millage rate and stated that the millage rate has not been this low since 2009. He spoke about the fraudulent code complaints issue that was discussed by Council Member Jablonski and agreed that the Town should address the matter. He spoke about the Mayor Chess Challenge and that the Town has joined the official Mayor's Chess Challenge happening on October 19<sup>th</sup>. He discussed the i9 Sports Programs that is starting in the Town and how they help bring the community together. He talked about nominations for Pioneer Day and that nominations were needed from the Council and residents. He stated that the nominations need to be submitted to Town Administrator Muñiz by end of day Monday August 26<sup>th</sup>.

## 9. Legal Comments

Town Attorney Poliakoff congratulated Babara Sharief on winning the primary race for the State Senate for the Town's district. He discussed the Code Compliance Department and the issues they face when dealing with fraudulent code cases. He advised the Town Council the lawsuits against the Town filed by Bruno Dogs were ruled upon and the rulings were in favor of the Town. He said he expected there to be an appeal.

## 10. Administration Comments

Town Administrator Muñiz discussed the Town's millage rate and that it is only a portion of their total tax bill. He spoke about the Town's special assessment fees and the fees associated with the additional cart fees for waste and recycling bins. He talked about the Public Safety and Traffic Committee and said that a recommendation from the Committee was to purchase additional vehicle mounted radar units for the Town of Davie Police units. He said the original recommendation was to purchase 14 units in 2025, but the Town could purchase 7 units this fiscal year from unassigned funds. He added that the remaining units could be purchased next fiscal year.

The following motion was made by Council Member Hartmann, seconded by Council Member Allbritton, and passed by a 5-0 roll call vote. The vote was as follows: Council Members Allbritton, Hartmann, Jablonski, Vice Mayor Kuczenski, and Mayor Breitkreuz voting yes.

**MOTION: TO PURCHASE 7 CAR MOUNTED RADAR UNITS FOR DAVIE POLICE DEPARTMENT IN FISCAL YEAR 2024 FROM THE UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$13,262.41.**

Town Administrator Muñiz called Administrative Specialist, Newsletter Editor & Graphic Designer Susan Kutz to address the Town Council on the plans for the Town's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

Administrative Specialist Kutz addressed the Town Council and discussed the plans for the celebration and procedures to become a sponsor for the event.

Mayor Breitkreuz thanked Administrative Specialist Kutz for her work on the project. Council Member Hartmann thanked her for all her efforts on the planning of the event and for all her work she has done on the Town Newsletter.

Town Administrator Muñiz addressed the questions from Vice Mayor Kuczenski and Council Member Hartmann regarding the fees for extra waste and recycling bins.

**Ordinances – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

**11.** AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES, FLORIDA AMENDING THE TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE ("ULDC"), ARTICLE 10, "DEFINITION OF TERMS," SECTION 010-030, "TERMS DEFINED," ARTICLE 45, "AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DISTRICTS," SECTION 045-030, "GENERAL PROVISIONS," AND ARTICLE 55, "MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT," SECTION 55-030, "GENERAL PROVISIONS," PERTAINING TO THE MEASUREMENT OF HEIGHT, AND PARTICULARLY THE HEIGHT OF FENCES, WALLS, HEDGES, AND STRUCTURES OTHER THAN BUILDINGS AND SIGNS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND, PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. {Approved on First Reading August 8, 2024}

The following motion was made by Council Member Jablonski, seconded by Vice Mayor Kuczenski, and passed by a 5-0 roll call vote. The vote was as follows: Council Members Allbritton, Hartmann, Jablonski, Vice Mayor Kuczenski, and Mayor Breitreuz voting yes.

**MOTION: TO APPROVE THE ORDINANCE ON 2<sup>ND</sup> READING.**

**Resolutions**

**12.** A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES, FLORIDA, DECLARING SURPLUS INVENTORY; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO PROPERLY DECLARE AND TO DISPOSE OF THE SURPLUS INVENTORY; WAIVING ALL APPLICABLE PROCUREMENT CODE PROVISIONS TO THE CONTRARY; ALLOWING THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR AND TOWN ATTORNEY TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS THAT MAY BE NECESSARY TO PROPERLY DISPOSE OF THE SURPLUS INVENTORY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The following motion was made by Vice Mayor Kuczenski, seconded by Council Member Hartmann, and passed by a 5-0 roll call vote. The vote was as follows: Council Members Allbritton, Hartmann, Jablonski, Vice Mayor Kuczenski, and Mayor Breitreuz voting yes.

**MOTION: TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION.**

**13.** A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHWEST RANCHES, FLORIDA, APPROVING A CHANGE ORDER WITH CPZ ARCHITECTS INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF THIRTY-FOUR THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED NINETY DOLLARS AND FORTY-THREE CENTS (\$34,590.43) FOR ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES FOR THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDED SOUTHWEST MEADOWS SANCTUARY PARK RESTROOM FACILITIES PROJECT; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE THE PURCHASE ORDER; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The following motion was made by Council Member Hartmann, seconded by Council Member Jablonski, and passed by a 5-0 roll call vote. The vote was as follows: Council Members Allbritton, Hartmann, Jablonski, Vice Mayor Kuczenski, and Mayor Breitreuz voting yes.

**MOTION: TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION.****Discussion**

**14.** Discussion - Southwest Meadows Preserve - Advisory Board Review - Vice Mayor Kuczenski  
Vice Mayor Kuczenski discussed the importance of the Town's Advisory Boards and the input provided by the residents from those Boards. He spoke about the Parks, Recreation, Forestry, and Natural Resources Advisory Board and asked that the Southwest Meadows Preserve fall under that Board and that future decisions regarding the Preserve be brought before the Parks Board before coming to the Town Council.

Council Member Jablonski agreed that resident input is important but raised the concern that issues may arise that need to be addressed in a timely manner by the Town Council and that waiting for a quorum for a Board to meet that may take months.

Mayor Breitreuz stated that resident input was important and needed for the Town. He said that sometimes there may be issues that have to be taken care of in a certain timeframe, and that the issues should be addressed as with any other Board. He said that the best practice is to let the Advisory Boards handle the issues and advise the Town Council when they can, but that the Town Council take responsibility from the Boards if items needed to be addressed in a timely manner.

Council Member Hartmann discussed the residents' involvement in the Town's Advisory Boards and how much more involved they are compared to neighboring municipalities. He said that residents should have their voices heard but the Town does need to intervene when an item needs to be addressed in a timely manner.

Council Member Allbritton stated that Southwest Meadows Preserve is different from the other parks in the Town due to the events held there and that is why the Town Council may need to intervene more often with that park.

**15. Appointments**

**a.** Parks, Recreation, Forestry, and Natural Resources Advisory Board Member Appointment – Council Member Gary Jablonski

**b.** Zero Waste Advisory Board Member Appointment - Council Member Jim Allbritton

Town Administrator Muñiz announced the following appointments for the Town Advisory Boards:

- Zero Waste Advisory Board – Rick Conrad appointed by Council Member Allbritton
- Parks, Recreation, Forestry, and Natural Resources Advisory Board – Ronal Martinez appointed by Council Member Jablonski
- Schools and Education Advisory Board – Elizabeth Eskanezi appointed by Vice Mayor Kuczenski

- Rural Public Arts Design Board – Kathy Jablonski appointed by Vice Mayor Kuczenski

**16. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted:*

  
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*Debra M. Ruesga, CMC, Town Clerk*

*Adopted by the Town Council on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2024.*

  
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*Steve Breitkreuz, Mayor*

PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTES 286.0105, THE TOWN HEREBY ADVISES THE PUBLIC THAT IF A PERSON DECIDES TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THIS COUNCIL WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT ITS MEETING OR HEARING, HE OR SHE WILL NEED A RECORD 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.