The City Commission of the City of Fernandina Beach, Florida convened in a Special Meeting, on Tuesday September 5, 2017 at 5:05 pm in the City Commission Chambers. Present were Mayor Robin C. Lentz presiding, Vice Mayor Len Kreger, Commissioners John A. Miller, Roy G. Smith, and Tim Poynter, City Clerk Caroline Best, City Manager Dale L. Martin and City Attorney Tammi Bach.

Mayor Lentz called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

4.1 Statement regarding the percentage increase in Millage over the rolled back rate necessary to fund the budget and the specific purpose for which ad valorem tax revenues are being increased.

I. Millage rate for operation expenditures
II. Millage rate for voter approved debt

Mayor Lentz read the truth and millage statement into the record as follows: "Prior to adoption of Resolution 2017-126, which sets the property tax millage rate for operating expenditures, and sets the millage rate for voter approved debt, Chapter 200.065 (4)(d), Florida Statutes, requires that the following statement be publicly announced. The taxing authority levying this property tax is the City Commission of the City of Fernandina Beach. The rolled back rate is 5.4951 mills per $1,000 of assessed value. The percentage increase is 9.19% over the rollback millage rate. The operating millage rate to be levied is 6.0000 mills per $1,000 of assessed value. The voter debt millage rate is .2097." Mayor Lentz opened the public hearing at this time.

4.2 FY 2017/2018 BUDGET:

Finance Comptroller Patti Clifford commented this past year saw an accounting system conversion; the current budget has the old account numbers however it is in process to change the cosmetics to reflect the new MUNIS software. Vice Mayor Kreger mentioned his concerns with the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) including the marina. Per state law real numbers should be identified for a more accurate budget including unfunded items.

Mr. Medardo Monzon, 2826 S. Fletcher, was not able to participate in the budget workshop however having reviewed the budget over the past sixty days and after asking Comptroller Clifford questions, was pleased to learn that long term debt is AAA rated reflecting city finances have been handled very well, however funds need a little more attention. As far as diversifying the tax base, the Commission is urged to show the revenues from the increased tax base and how it is benefitting the public as well as scrutinizing the increase by 10% of general fund expenses which is four times the national average. Mayor Lentz responded one of the increases is personnel related due to the economic downturn when there was a skeleton staff.

Comptroller Clifford shared one of the biggest increases is building and permitting which restricted revenue with larger expenditures in next year's budget for adding staff. Noting her own impending retirement there will be a "duplicate" Comptroller to learn the position which also adds to the increase.

Mr. Leslie Rohde, 645 King George Lane, as a thirty year business owner has a clear understanding of accounting. Using the airport as an example, Mr. Rohde stated it is a leasing company not necessarily an airport that makes money and noted the budget does not clearly represent to the public the operational and non-operational.

Vice Mayor Kreger reiterated that when the economy went down everything went down and the City has finally returned to the level it once was as far as staffing. Next year will certainly bring a "crunch".

Ms. Margaret Kirkland, 1377 Plantation Point Drive, on behalf of Amelia Tree Conservancy was encouraged to see a conservancy position considered but then removed and hopes the Commission will reconsider. The environment and tree canopy are important financially to tourism and retirees. A suggestion would be to hire someone with an undergrad degree in parks and recreation with a master's degree in conservation.

Mayor Lentz closed the public hearing.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the City Commission, the Special Meeting was adjourned at 5:22 pm.

ATTEST:

Caroline Best

CAROLINE BEST
City Clerk

JOHN A. MILLER
Mayor-Commissioner