

**Official Minutes of  
MARION COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

April 23, 2024

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Marion County Board of County Commissioners met in a special session in Commission Chambers at 10:04 a.m. on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at the Marion County Governmental Complex located in Ocala, Florida.

**INTRODUCTION OF PUBLIC HEARING BY CHAIRMAN MICHELLE STONE**

Chairman Stone advised that the public hearing was scheduled this afternoon to consider the adoption of an Ordinance to amend Section 12-446 of the Marion County Code of Ordinances to Increase the maximum assessment rate and change the name of the Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) associated with the Doublegate Subdivision.

The Deputy Clerk was in receipt of a 7 page Agenda Packet.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our Country.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon roll call the following members were present: Chairman Michelle Stone, District 5; Commissioner Craig Curry, District 1; Commissioner Matthew McClain, District 3; and Commissioner Carl Zalak, III, District 4. Commissioner Kathy Bryant, District 2, was absent due to a prior commitment. Also present were County Attorney Matthew G. Minter, County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Tracy Straub.

**PROOF OF PUBLICATION**

Deputy Clerk Mills-McAllister presented Proof of Publication of a display ad entitled, "Notice of Public Hearing" published in the Star Banner newspaper on April 2, 2024. The Notice states the Board will consider an Ordinance amending the name of the Doublegate Subdivision Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) for General Services and increasing the Maximum Assessment rate for the unit.

**STAFF PRESENTATION**

**PUBLIC HEARING:** to Consider the Adoption of an Ordinance to Amend Section 12-446 of the Marion County Code of Ordinances to Increase the Maximum Assessment Rate and Change the Name of the Municipal Service Benefit Unit Associated with the Doublegate Subdivision

MSTU Director Chad Wicker presented the following recommendation:

Description/Background: Staff is recommending to amend the name of the Doublegate Subdivision Municipal Service Taxing Unit for General Services to now read as Doublegate Subdivision Municipal Service Benefit Unit for General Maintenance and Capital Improvements to better describe the legal status of the unit with regard to its purpose.

April 23, 2024

In 1997, Doublegate Subdivision established its first Ordinance which set the maximum rate at \$35.00 per parcel. In 2006, the maximum rate was increased to \$50.00 per parcel. The rate is no longer sufficient for the current level of service in Doublegate Subdivision and is not sustainable under the current assessment amount. The proposed solution is to amend the existing Ordinance to establish a new maximum rate of \$100.00, which would allow the Board discretion to consider enacting a rate resolution of up to \$100.00 per parcel at a later Public Hearing.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the proposed Ordinance to amend the name change to Doublegate Subdivision Municipal Service Benefit Unit for General Maintenance and Capital Improvements and increase the maximum assessment rate to \$100.00 and authorize the Chair and Clerk to execute the same.

MSTU Director Chad Wicker presented a 7 page Agenda packet to follow along with the PowerPoint presentation. He advised that today's public hearing is in reference to the Doublegate Subdivision MSTU for streetlights. The proposed Ordinance for consideration addresses two items. The first item is to amend the name from Doublegate subdivision MSTU to Doublegate subdivision MSBU. Mr. Wicker stated the request relates to an MSTU being assessed through ad valorem taxes via a millage rate and is directly related to the assessed property value. A MSBU is assessed through a non-ad valorem via flat rate, which is equally distributed per parcel. This subdivision is assessed a flat rate per parcel for their streetlights, so the change is being made to reflect the assessment properly.

Mr. Wicker advised that the second item for consideration relates to an increase in the maximum assessment rate to a maximum allowable rate of \$100.00, which provides improved general services to the Doublegate subdivision. He stated the current maximum allowable rate is set at \$50.00 per parcel, per year, noting the rate has not been increased in the past 12 years. The current assessment is \$40.00. Mr. Wicker referred to a chart as seen on the overhead screens, noting in fiscal year (FY) 2023/24 the ending fund balance will be negative \$52.00. He commented on requesting a Resolution to raise the current assessment, which would result in the need to come back before the Board in 2 years to address the same issue. Mr. Wicker advised that the proposed Ordinance would set the maximum rate at \$100.00 and allow the Board to consider a Rate Resolution at a public hearing that is scheduled in May. It would increase the rate allowing the MSTU Department to offer the same level of service (LOS) or even improve the LOS to the Doublegate subdivision.

In response to Commissioner Curry, Mr. Wicker advised that the Doublegate subdivision MSTU originated in 1997.

Commissioner Zalak questioned if the request is to increase the maximum allowable rate, and then come back before the Board when necessary to request an increase in the assessment based on the electric bills. Mr. Wicker concurred, noting when the Department comes back in May, the request will be to increase the rate to \$55.00. He stated this MSTU is only for streetlighting.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairman Stone opened the floor for public comment.

There being none, Chairman Stone advised that public comment is now closed.

**BOARD DISCUSSION: NONE**

**CLOSING COMMENTS: NONE**

A motion was made by Commissioner Zalak, seconded by Commissioner Curry, to adopt Ordinance 24-12 approving the name change to Doublegate Subdivision MSBU for General Maintenance and Capital Improvements and increasing the maximum assessment rate to \$100.00. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board (4-0).

Ordinance 24-12 is entitled:

AN ORDINANCE OF MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE DOUBLEGATE SUBDIVISION MUNICIPAL SERVICE TAXING UNIT FOR GENERAL SERVICES; AMENDING ORDINANCE NUMBERS 97-7 AND 12-06, CODIFIED AS SECTION 12-446 OF THE MARION COUNTY CODE TO AMEND THE NAME OF THE MSBU TO DOUBLEGATE SUBDIVISION MUNICIPAL SERVICE BENEFIT UNIT FOR GENERAL MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS; AMENDING CHAPTER 12, ARTICLE XXXI, SECTION 12-449; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN CODE AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mr. Bouyounes stated there are several entities that will also be coming before the Board for a name change.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting thereupon adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Stone, Chairman

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory C. Harrell, Clerk

DRAFT

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK