



Item: Resolution 9889 to Levy and Assess Special Improvement Portage Meadows Maintenance District No. 1195

From: Martha Capps, Operations Supervisor

Initiated By: Annual Assessment Process

Presented By: Coleen Balzarini, Fiscal Services Director

Action Requested: City Commission conduct public hearing and adopt Resolution 9889

Public Hearing:

1. Mayor conducts public hearing, calling three times each for opponents and proponents.
2. Mayor closes public hearing and asks the will of the Commission.

Suggested Motion:

1. Commissioner moves:

“I move that the City Commission (adopt /deny) Resolution 9889.”

2. Mayor calls for a second, discussion, and calls for the vote.
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Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the City Commission adopt Resolution 9889.

Background: The Portage Meadows Fund is administered by the Park and Recreation Department. The purpose of the fund is to maintain the turf, trees, irrigation system and provide snow removal in the green belt park of the Portage Meadows Addition. There are currently 186 parcels that directly benefit and are affected by the upkeep and maintenance of Portage Meadows. The budget development process begins in January of each year when the Park and Recreation Department receives its midyear financial reports. The midyear reports are used to determine the current financial position of the Portage Meadows Fund and as a basis for projecting future earnings and expenditures. Information is gathered regarding the actual and anticipated expenses, future projects, goals and objectives of the Fund. After calculating all factors pertinent to the operation of maintaining the green belt park area, an assessment amount for the next fiscal year is calculated, budgeted and presented to the City Commissioners for approval.

During the budget development process, the Park and Recreation Department spent extensive time reviewing the previous costs versus assessments to scrutinize all General Fund expenditures and to scrutinize all General Fund expenditures for the Portage Meadows Maintenance District. It was determined the assessment was insufficient to cover the actual expenses. The excess expenses have been paid out of the cash reserves for Portage Meadows Maintenance District and the General Fund Parks division, rather than the assessment to the benefitting properties. The cash reserves have been depleted, and now a significant increase is required to meet the shortfall.

The anticipated assessment amount for Portage Meadows for the next fiscal year is the amount reflected in the FY 2011 Budget. The Portage Meadows Area assessment requires an increase of 116% over Fiscal Year 09/10. This equates to an assessment of \$0.055827 per square foot, for a total of \$46,992. This will result in an assessment of \$251.28 for an average lot of 4,501 square feet (4,501 sq ft x 0.055827 factor = \$251.28). The increased assessment does not include future capital costs.

Concurrences: Representatives from the City's Park and Recreation, Fiscal Services, Administration, and City Commissioners have all been involved throughout the review and approval process of the annual budget.

Fiscal Impact: Adoption of Resolution 9889 will allow the City to finance the cost of work, improvements, and maintenance required to be made each year in the special improvement Portage Meadows Boulevard Maintenance District.

Alternatives: The City Commission could choose to deny Resolution 9889 to Levy and Assess Portage Meadows Boulevard Maintenance; however, the services provided are the services the City agreed to provide when the land area was donated to the City.

Attachments/Exhibits: Portage Meadow Assessment Summary
from Neighborhood Council #4 Meeting 7/22/10
Resolution 9889

Cc: Giles Salyer, Park Maintenance Supervisor

Portage Meadows Assessment
Neighborhood Council #4
July 22, 2010

From: Patty Rearden

In 1976 the City and the Developer of Portage Meadows entered into an agreement establishing a Planned Unit Development (PUD) to be known as Portage Meadows. The agreement references the Greenbelt Area and the Maintenance of the Greenbelt Improvements.

“City shall be responsible for upkeep and maintenance, including the cost thereof, of said portion of the Greenbelt. The Portage Meadows Maintenance District shall become effective for those lots contiguous to a completed section of the Greenbelt.....”

In 1977, Resolution 6913 created Special Improvement Maintenance District 1195 for the purpose of maintaining the Green Belt of the Portage Meadows Addition. In July 1977 and July 1991, the City of Great Falls amended the boundaries of the district to include the areas completed by further development.

- I. Assessment Includes:
 - 1. Personnel Costs for dedicated employee
 - i. 5 days/week— irrigation, greenbelt cleanup, help w/mowing
 - 2. Operating Supplies (Irrigation -- sprinkler heads, valves, etc.)
 - i. Park Maintenance budget has covered many of the supplies
 - ii. \$1,000 budgeted in FY11, Controller \$1,500
 - 3. Purchased Services -- Water
 - 4. Internal Service Charges (Fiscal, Central Insurance)
 - 5. Green Area Service Charges
 - i. Includes mowing, trimming, snow removal and sweeping
- II. Not included:
 - 1. Unscheduled labor – irrigations system repairs, storm clean up, etc.
 - 2. Equipment and fuel costs
 - 3. Capital (irrigation system)
 - 4. Parks have been absorbing costs (equipment, parts, labor)
- III. What’s changed:
 - 1. Increasing demands on the general fund
 - 2. Staff was directed to scrutinize all budgets, budgets to be self sustaining
 - 3. Portage Meadows’ Reserves have been depleted

IV. Options:

1. Increase in assessment
 - i. Still will not cover:
 1. Capital
 2. Weed control/spraying
 3. Higher level of maintenance (than current)
 - ii. Average of \$251 per home owner
 1. Comparison to lawn care: 22 weeks of mowing @ \$20 (most \$25-30) = \$440
 - a. Would not include irrigation system, repairs, water, snow removal
2. Decrease level/quality of services
 - i. Water
 - ii. Irrigation
 - iii. Mowing
 - iv. Snow Removal