

# Fire department looking at various ways to aid its employees with mental health

By Teresa Sargeant  
Apopka Chief Staff

In a time when the stigma of mental illness has become more removed from society, some factions such as firefighters are addressing it more.

The Apopka Fire Department's wish list item of \$12,000 per year for mental trauma coverage didn't get implemented into the city of Apopka's tentative fiscal year 2021 budget. Nevertheless, the AFD doesn't want to ignore addressing and tackling mental illness.

"We're just trying to make a better working environment for our firefighters and keeping them happy and healthy, and as safe as possible," Apopka Fire Chief Wylam said in a recent interview. "Mental health is a big part of that." The AFD presented its budget request for trauma coverage at the July 13 budget workshop hearing, when the City Council spent three days from July 13-15 listening to various city department's proposals.

On July 15, the City Council unanimously approved a proposed property tax rate of 4.2876 mills for fiscal year 2020-2021 that begins October 1. That rate is 0.25 mills higher than the current property tax rate of 4.0376 mills.

At the proposed rate, property owners would pay \$428.76 for every \$100,000 in taxable property value, \$25 more than the current year. However, council members are hopeful



Fire Chief Sean Wylam is seeking to help employees cope with work stress.

that revenue numbers from the state and other funding sources will improve so that the current rate of 4.0376 mills can be used for next year's budget.

There are currently 108 firefighters on the city of Apopka's payroll. All of them are trained emergency medical technicians. If the AFD does receive trauma coverage, it would cover all the firefighters.

"Most of the traumatic stuff does come from the EMT side," Wylam said.

No specific incident had occurred that motivated the AFD to put trauma coverage on its wish list to the City Council.

"It was more of a discussion with our fire department, staff, and administration," Wylam said. "One of the things that we've seen in the fire service as a whole (is) that mental health and wellness is becoming a serious problem within the first-responder community. A lot of times there's a lack of information, overall understanding, and support basically with a lot of this stuff. That's something we

wanted to obviously – for a lack of a better term – beef up for our firefighters."

Currently, the city's Employee Assistance Program and external resources through UCF Restores provides the Apopka firefighters with mental health resources.

UCF Restores offers trauma management therapy, exposure therapy, group therapy, and other forms of treatment on an outpatient and intensive outpatient basis.

"Our three-week intensive outpatient program is structured to provide trauma-specific treatment for veterans, active duty military, and first responders," according to the UCF Restores website. "During treatment, cohort members will participate in individual and group sessions that target symptoms of avoidance, guilt, anger, poor sleep, and social isolation."

The request for mental health trauma coverage has never been made in front of City Council before the July 13 budget workshop "on this scale," Wylam

said.

The Society for Trauma Education and Empowered Recovery is the organization the AFD reached out to, and they gave the department a proposal for its employees' coverage. Based in Winston-Salem, N.C., the mission of STEER is "to prevent traumas through education and provide traumatized families financial security, phys-

See FIRE Page 6A

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## APOPKA CITY NOTIFICATION OF SPECIAL ELECTION

The City of Apopka will hold a special election on November 3, 2020, the same date as the General Election, where voters in the City of Apopka will have the privilege of voting for candidates for the Apopka City Council, Seat 2.

Qualifying for candidates will be held from 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26, 2020, and ends at 12:00 p.m. on Friday, August 28, 2020, in the City Clerk's office, 120 East Main Street, Apopka, Florida, 32703.

The Commissioners qualifying fee is \$636.00, based on a salary of \$15,900. The qualifying fee must be paid by check drawn on the candidate's campaign account, payable to the City of Apopka, and signed by the Campaign Treasurer at the time of qualifying.

Publish: August 7, 2020  
August 14, 2020

Publish: The Apopka Chief 166919

## CIUDAD DE APOPKA NOTIFICACIÓN DE ELECCIÓN ESPECIAL

Se da aviso de una Elección Especial en la Ciudad de Apopka el 3 de noviembre de 2020, la misma fecha que la Elección General, donde los electores en las Elecciones General de Apopka tendrán el privilegio de votar por los candidatos para el Consejo de la Ciudad de Apopka, Asiento 2.

La calificación para postularse para ser candidato se llevará a cabo a partir de las 12:00 de la tarde el miércoles 26 de agosto de 2020, y termina a las 12:00 de la tarde el viernes 28 de agosto de 2020, en la oficina de la Secretaria Municipal, 120 East Main Street, Apopka, Florida, 32703.

La tarifa de calificación para ser candidato es \$636.00. La tarifa esta basada en un salario de \$15,900 para comisionado. La tarifa es pagada con un cheque emitido a la Ciudad de Apopka de la cuenta de la campaña del candidato, y firmado por el tesorero de la campaña al momento de calificación.

Publicar: 07 de agosto de 2020  
14 de agosto de 2020

Publish: The Apopka Chief 166919

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# Bird: Group seeking to raise about \$30,000 to complete refurbishing

Continued from page 1A

the group has shared a rendering on social media. A copy of that rendering accompanies this story.

Also, a committee has been formed by the alumni association just to deal with the restoration and relocation project. That committee is chaired by Sean Fitzgerald, a 1989 Apopka High graduate and now a certified general contractor and specialist in restoration projects.

"We needed to not only organize and streamline the process but, additionally, needed to have some type of a visual that folks could see the vision behind what we were trying to do," Condrey said. "We thought it would be imperative for us to see the before-and-after, if you will, of the state and condition that the bird is in now vs. where we wanted to go with this and bring it

back to its refurbished glory and something for us to be, as long-term Blue Darters and generational folks, proud of and to make it a launching pad for the alumni association to truly come to life."

Condrey said she understands that folks might be hesitant to support a project such as this during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Obviously, in the current economic times, it does feel a little bit outlandish to say that we're going to spend \$30,000 on a bird and that the money, probably to many, could be better spent, but this is symbolic to us in so many ways for just the very reason of what Apopka and our high school means to all of us," Condrey said.

"It's one of the last two items, along with Roger Williams Field, that are still standing (from the 1976 campus) and it just felt like

the right thing to do for not just the current students but for those of us alumni as well as any future students to see that we are genuinely investing and trying to give back to the school. We want this to be a beacon and representation of that.

"We want to do it right. There's no sense in us doing this in a partial way that another group in 10, 20, 30 years is going to have to come behind us and refurbish it again."

Fitzgerald said the project would probably cost up to twice the \$30,000 amount, but that he and others will donate their time and effort to the restoration and relocation of the Darter bird.

"The magnitude of cost is somewhere within the \$50,000 to \$60,000 range now. That includes a removal, restoration, relocation, site work, and it's going to be (relocated to) a raised pedestal," Fitzgerald said.

"That's the value of it. If you were to pay a contractor to come out and do all the stuff at contractor pricing, that's the magnitude of cost. Ideally, we think we're going to be under that through work effort and gifts."

Sunbelt Metals, an Apopka metal fabricator, will be restoring the Darter bird. Bill Harbin, founder of Sunbelt Metals, was the original designer and fabricator of the Darter bird that was erected sometime



The Blue Darter mascot statue has been located in a small pond on the Apopka High campus since 1977.

in 1977.

"He passed away on July 4 of this year. We're proud to say that the bird is going to go back to the family for the restoration process and they'll be the primary fabricators and will take care of the construction," Fitzgerald said.

For those who wish to help out financially, donations can be made directly for the restoration project.

"We're looking for funding of this to have its own budget. We're intending to raise money specifically for this effort," Fitzgerald said.

While getting the Darter bird out of the pond and to Sunbelt Metals, Fitzgerald said the entire project timeline depends on how much work needs to be done to fully restore the metal object.

"Once we get the bird out and it gets evaluated, then we can put a timeline to everything else," Fitzgerald said.

Kevin Harbin is heading the project for Sunbelt Metals, Condrey said, and has been able to inspect the statue and has determined that it's salvageable

but needs to take a closer look at it at his shop to determine exactly what needs to be done.

"It's metal construction with some infills and things that are unknown," Fitzgerald said.

Condrey said that donations may be given directly for the project through the alumni association's website, [www.apopkaalumni.com](http://www.apopkaalumni.com).

"An option on our website that specifically goes to the bird restoration vs. other things that we do which is our annual dues for our alumni membership as well as shirts and different things that we've done this past year. There is a way to specifically allocate those funds for the bird restoration," she said.

Although there won't be any type of definitive timeline until the Darter bird is removed from the pond and evaluated by Sunbelt Metals, Fitzgerald said he hopes to have the project ready for a dedication ceremony in the spring of 2021.

Condrey said she is hoping the community will get behind the project.

"We just want to give an update to the community and hopefully stir some interest, something to be excited about in our current situation and something for the students to be proud of, as we are of our history there. But we are definitely in need of support whether it's through resources or funds."

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## NOTICE OF HEARING TO IMPOSE AND PROVIDE FOR COLLECTION OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS IN THE RESIDENCES AT EMERSON PARK

(Resolution 2020-22)

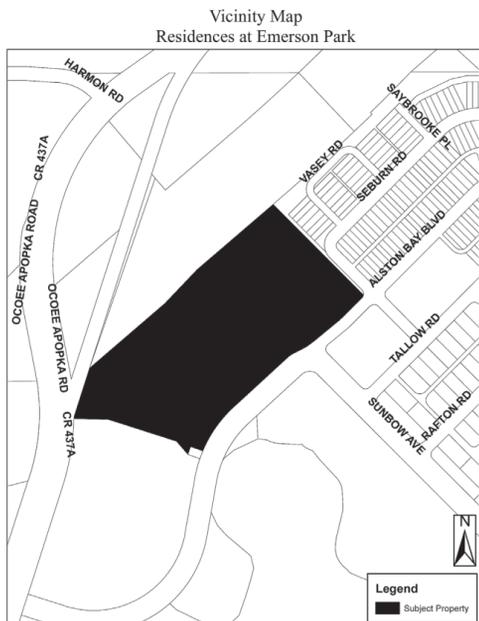
Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Apopka will conduct a public hearing to consider creation of the Residences at Emerson Park Street Lighting Assessment Area as described herein and imposition of special assessments for street lighting services, facilities and program cost relating to street lighting therein. The hearing will be held at 1:30PM, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard on September 9, 2020 and at 7:00 PM on September 16, 2020 in the City Council Chambers located at the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida for the purpose of receiving public comment on the proposed Residences at Emerson Park Street Lighting Assessment Area.

The Assessment District shall take effect **October 1, 2021** for fiscal year 2021/2022 and thereafter, the collection of the assessment will be on the ad valorem tax bill. All affected real property owners have a right to appear at the hearing and to file written comments with the City Clerk any time prior to the public hearing. If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at the hearing such person will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be made. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act persons needing a special accommodation or an interpreter to participate in this proceeding should contact the City Clerk at 407-703-1704 at least seven days prior to the date of the hearing.

The assessment for each parcel of real property will be based upon the total number of parcels within the assessment area (minus properties owned by the Homeowners Association and municipal facilities). A more specific description of the improvement and method of computing the assessment for each parcel of real property are set forth in the Assessment Resolution to be adopted. Copies of the Assessment Resolution and preliminary Assessment Roll are available for inspection at the Apopka City Hall located at 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida 32703. The City Council intends to collect the assessments annually on the ad valorem tax bill as authorized by Section 197.3632, Florida Statutes of each year. Failure to pay the assessments will cause a tax certificate to be issued against the real property which may result in a loss of title.

If you have questions please contact Chuck Vavrek at 407-703-1771 ext 554.

The property to be assessed is shown as follows:



August 7, 14, 21, and 28, 2020

Publish: The Apopka Chief

166908

## NOTICE OF HEARING TO IMPOSE AND PROVIDE FOR COLLECTION OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS IN THE OAK POINTE NORTH

(Resolution 2020-20)

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Apopka will conduct a public hearing to consider creation of the Oak Pointe North Street Lighting Assessment Area as described herein and imposition of special assessments for street lighting services, facilities and program cost relating to street lighting therein. The hearing will be held at 1:30PM, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard on September 9, 2020 and at 7:00 PM on September 16, 2020 in the City Council Chambers located at the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida for the purpose of receiving public comment on the proposed Oak Pointe North Street Lighting Assessment Area.

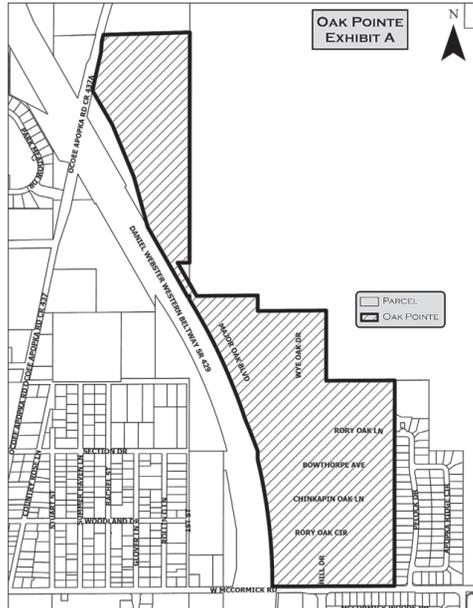
The Assessment District shall take effect **October 1, 2021** for fiscal year 2021/2022 and thereafter, the collection of the assessment will be on the ad valorem tax bill. All affected real property owners have a right to appear at the hearing and to file written comments with the City Clerk any time prior to the public hearing. If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at the hearing such person will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be made. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act persons needing a special accommodation or an interpreter to participate in this proceeding should contact the City Clerk at 407-703-1704 at least seven days prior to the date of the hearing.

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The City Council intends to collect the assessments annually on the ad valorem tax bill as authorized by Section 197.3632, Florida Statutes of each year. Failure to pay the assessments will cause a tax certificate to be issued against the real property which may result in a loss of title.

If you have questions please contact Chuck Vavrek at 407-703-1771 ext 554.

The property to be assessed is shown as follows:



July 31, August 7, 14, 21, 2020

Publish: The Apopka Chief

166838

# Vote: Primary election day is scheduled for Tuesday, August 18

Continued from page 1A

tent. You drive up there and drop it off.

"That's important as we get closer to election day as they can take it to a voting box to make sure it gets there on time. That's a key thing."

Cowles also said the primary election is a time where voters can cast their ballots on several local elections from the Orange County School Board to the Florida House of Representatives for District 31.

"It's important to vote in that," he said. "Here's a chance to have a say in your local government."

Cowles added that only 18 percent of registered voters bothered to vote in the primary election in 2016.

"This is about our local community. Vote for the local issues now and focus on the presidential race in November," Cowles said.

In addition to the Apopka site, there are 17 other early-voting sites around Orange County for the August 18 primary. Any Orange County registered voter may cast a ballot at any early-voting site during the early-voting period.

The other early-voting sites are: Orange County supervisor of elections office, 119 W. Kaley St., Orlando; Alafaya Branch Library, 12000 E. Colonial Dr., Orlando; Chickasaw Branch Library, 870 N. Chickasaw Trail, Orlando; Fairview Shores Library, 902 Lee Rd., Suite 26, Orlando; Hiwassee Branch Library, 7391 W. Colonial Dr., Orlando; Marks Street Senior Recreation Complex, 99 E. Marks St., Orlando; Meadow Woods Recreation Center, 1751 Rhode Island Woods Circle, Or-

lando; Renaissance Senior Center, 3800 S. Econlockhatchee Trail, Orlando; South Creek Branch Library, 1702 Deerfield Blvd., Orlando; Southeast Branch Library, 5575 S. Semoran Blvd., Orlando; Southwest Branch Library, 7255 Della Dr., Orlando; Tibet-Butler Preserve, 8777 County Road 535, Winter Garden; UCF: The Garden Room at Live Oak Event Center, 4115 Pyxis Lane, Orlando; Washington Park Branch Library, 5151 Raleigh St., Orlando; Water Conserv II Distribution Center, 17498 McKinney Rd., Winter Garden; West Oaks Branch Library, 1821 E. Silver Star Rd., Ocoee; and Winter Park Library, 460 E. New England Ave., Winter Park.

The primary election will take place on Tuesday, August 18, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and voting will be done at each voter's assigned precinct.

The political races on the ballot will be determined by each voter's residential address and political party affiliation, if any.

First-term Orange County School Board member Melissa Byrd of Apopka faces two opponents in the non-partisan race for District 7.

Jeannetta Maxena of Apopka and Ericka Bell of Winter Garden qualified to run against Byrd, who faces opposition after only two years in office because former school board member Christine Moore resigned in the middle of her term for a successful run for the Orange County Commission. That county commission seat came open when Bryan Nelson resigned after two years into his second term to run for mayor of Apopka, which he won over first-term incumbent Joe Kilsheimer.

In the two races for Florida



Political signs line the street and sidewalk in front of the Apopka early-voting site.

House of Representatives who serve Apopka and Northwest Orange County, one incumbent is unopposed while another has decided not to run for re-election and her seat is up for grabs.

Kamia Brown, a Democrat from District 45, represents all of Apopka south of U.S. Highway 441 as well as much of Ocoee and portions of Pine Hills, faces no opposition and was automatically re-elected to another two-year term.

Meanwhile, incumbent Republican Jennifer Sullivan for District 31, which stretches from the Apopka area that is north of U.S. 441 into Lake County, has withdrawn from the race after having a baby a couple of months ago and moving to be with her husband in Texas where he is stationed as an Air Force officer.

Sullivan's withdrawal has attracted two Democrats and two Republicans. Debra Kaplan and Crissy Stile are running on the Democrat ticket, while Stevan Novakovic and Keith Truenow will battle in the Republican primary.

In the Florida Senate race for District 11, incumbent Democrat Randolph Bracy faces a general election battle from Republican Joshua Eli Adams. District 11 covers all of Apopka and Northwest Orange County, most of Ocoee and Winter Garden, and stretches east to Interstate 4.

In the race for Orange County sheriff, first-term incumbent

John Mina, a Democrat, faces six opponents – four fellow Democrats and two write-in candidates.

Democrats lined up to face Mina of Ocoee are Andrew Darling of Winter Garden, and Jose "Joe" Lopez, Eric L. McIntyre, and Darryl B. Sheppard, all of Orlando. The write-in candidates are Tim Lucas Adams and Winston Johnson, both of Orlando.

The only other countywide race is the one for Orange County property appraiser.

Incumbent Rick Singh of Orlando will face two fellow Democrats in the primary, Amy Mercado and Khalid Muneer, both of Orlando. Also running are write-in candidates S. Scott Boyd of Winter Garden and Tim Loucks, who lists his address as a post office box in Groveland, which is in Lake County.

Four Orange County officeholders, all Democrats, will be automatically re-elected to four-year terms as they have no opposition. Automatically qualifying for new terms are: Clerk of Courts Tiffany Moore Russell, Comptroller Phil Diamond, Tax Collector Scott Randolph, and Supervisor of Elections Bill Cowles.

In the race for state attorney for Circuit 9, which covers Orange and Osceola counties, five people have qualified to run for the open seat. Incumbent Aramis Ayala is not running for re-election after serving one term.

Four Democrats and one

with no party affiliation are vying to win the seat.

The Democrats are: Deborah Lynne Barra, Belvin Perry Jr., Ryan Williams, and Monique Worrell. Jose Torroella is running under no party affiliation.

Public defender Bob Wesley, a Democrat, is running unopposed for another four-year term in Circuit 9.

Val Demings, incumbent congressional representative for U.S. House District 10, will face general election opposition from two Republicans and one write-in candidate. The Democrat has no primary opposition.

Facing Demings will be GOP candidates Vennia Francois and Willie J. Montague, and write-in candidate Sufiyah Yasmine.

In addition to these races, the election for president will feature presumptive nominees Joe Biden for the Democrats and President Donald J. Trump for the Republicans.

The general election will be held November 3 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. while early voting will take place from October 19-November 1 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day. The deadline to register to vote for the general election will be October 5.

Visit [ocfelections.com](http://ocfelections.com) or call 407-836-2070 for more information about the upcoming elections, updating party affiliation, requesting a vote-by-mail ballot, and more.

## NOTICE OF HEARING TO IMPOSE AND PROVIDE FOR COLLECTION OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS IN THE BRIDAL PATH DEVELOPMENT

(Resolution 2020-18)

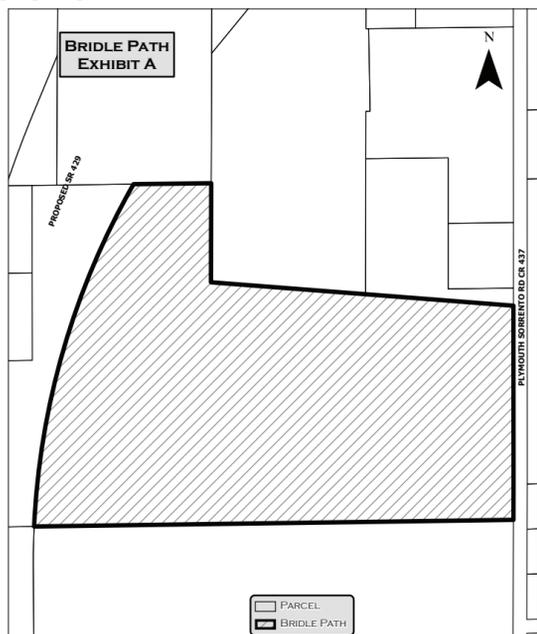
Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Apopka will conduct a public hearing to consider creation of the Bridal Path Assessment Area as described herein and imposition of special assessments for street lighting services, facilities and program cost relating to street lighting therein. The hearing will be held at 7:00 PM, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard on August 19, 2020 and at 1:30 PM on September 9, 2020 in the City Council Chambers located at the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida for the purpose of receiving public comment on the proposed Bridal Path Street Lighting Assessment Area. Beginning fiscal year 2021/2022 and thereafter, the collection of the assessment will be on the ad valorem tax bill. All affected real property owners have a right to appear at the hearing and to file written comments with the City Clerk any time prior to the public hearing. If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at the hearing such person will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be made. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act persons needing a special accommodation or an interpreter to participate in this proceeding should contact the City Clerk at 407-703-1704 at least seven days prior to the date of the hearing.

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If you have questions please contact Chuck Vavrek at 407-703-1771 ext 554.

The property to be assessed is shown as follows:



July 24, 31,  
August 7, 14, 2020

Publish: The Apopka Chief

166821

## NOTICE OF HEARING TO IMPOSE AND PROVIDE FOR COLLECTION OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS IN THE AVIAN POINTE DEVELOPMENT

(Resolution 2020-19)

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Apopka will conduct a public hearing to consider creation of the Avian Pointe Street Lighting Assessment Area as described herein and imposition of special assessments for street lighting services, facilities and program cost relating to street lighting therein. The hearing will be held at 7:00 PM, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard on August 19, 2020 and at 1:30 PM on September 9, 2020 in the City Council Chambers located at the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida for the purpose of receiving public comment on the proposed Bridal Path Street Lighting Assessment Area.

The Assessment District shall take effect **October 1, 2021** for fiscal year 2021/2022 and thereafter, the collection of the assessment will be on the ad valorem tax bill. All affected real property owners have a right to appear at the hearing and to file written comments with the City Clerk any time prior to the public hearing. If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at the hearing such person will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be made. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act persons needing a special accommodation or an interpreter to participate in this proceeding should contact the City Clerk at 407-703-1704 at least seven days prior to the date of the hearing.

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The property to be assessed is shown as follows:



July 24, 31,  
August 7, 14, 2020

Publish: The Apopka Chief

166820