

**NOTICE OF HEARING
BEFORE THE HAINES CITY WATER CONTROL DISTRICT IN POLK COUNTY
TO CONSIDER AN UPDATE OF THE WATER CONTROL PLAN
AND TO LEVY AND PROVIDE FOR COLLECTION OF
ANNUAL NON-AD VALOREM SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS
TO FUND COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH
WATER CONTROL AND ACTIONS TO MAKE LANDS WITHIN THE DISTRICT AVAILABLE
AND HABITABLE FOR SETTLEMENT AND AGRICULTURE**

Geographic Description of District Boundaries (See Boundary Map)
The property subject to this district and assessment lies within Polk County, Florida.

This notice concerns the process the Board of Supervisors of the Haines City Water Control District, an independent special district, (the "District"), is considering to address the challenge of acting to update the District's water control plan and accomplish funding of essential District services and facilities. This published Notice is compliant with the requirements of law, and at the same time shares and directs the reader to an overview and brief explanation of the challenges faced by the District.

The District gives notice that is necessary to prepare and consider an updated water control plan and to adopt an increase in non-ad valorem assessments to achieve financial sustainability in the annual budget process by levying such assessments to provide adequate revenues to pay for annual operating and capital costs associated with its required water control planning process, and to create necessary and reasonable reserves. The District water control plan and assessments are for the purpose of comprehensive water management and control toward development of lands within the District, and managing water by means of canals, ditches, levees, dikes, pumping, and other water control works and improvements toward making the lands within the District available and habitable for settlement and agriculture, for the public convenience, welfare, utility and benefit, and other purposes as provided by chapter 298, Florida Statutes, and other applicable law.

The District's water control plan has not been updated for many years, the District does not have significant reserves, and its operations and statutory responsibility cannot be sustained without an increase in current annual revenues. The District Board's objective is to take guidance from chapter 298, Florida Statutes, and put in place the minimum rate of non-ad valorem assessment of Fifty Dollars (\$50) per acre or portion thereof in each instance for each parcel in the District as provided for in s. 298.349, Florida Statutes, which is recommended for initial or start-up operations. By considering actions needed to update the District's required water control plan, the consequences of past practices, the necessity to create and replenish reasonable reserves in the annual budget, and reasonably and realistically better anticipate costs of District service, operations, capital delivery and administration in the District's overall budget, and other economic conditions while showing financial and water control stewardship, and in consideration of the required timing for notice and public hearing on the matter - this Notice is necessary and required by law. Without consideration, imposition and levy of additional revenues the District cannot sustain its statutory responsibilities and effectively budget for the upcoming fiscal year 2018-19.

Accordingly, provision of water control and actions to make lands within the District available and habitable for settlement and agriculture will likely continue in ensuing years to be funded, almost exclusively, by these assessments apportioned and levied by law on property located within the District.

A proposed list of affected parcels will be posted on the District's website at <http://hainescitywatercontroldistrict.com/> If you wish to learn more, more information can be obtained at the District's website.

On Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 5:00 p.m. the District Board of Supervisors of the Haines City Water Control District will hold a public hearing in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall, 620 East Main Street, Haines City, Florida, for the purpose of receiving comments on the District's proposed water control plan and non-ad valorem assessments.

You are invited to attend or appear at the public hearing, and/or to file written comments or objections with the District Secretary within the 20 days before the hearing. You are encouraged to send your written comments or objections to the District Secretary at myhcwcd@gmail.com All written comments or objections received prior to the hearing will be summarized and shared with the District Board for consideration. If you decide to appeal any decision made by the District Board with respect to any matter considered at or after the hearing, you 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 this approach the District expects to consider each parcel of property assigned an identification number by the Polk County Property Appraiser as one (1) tax parcel. If approved by District Board after the hearing, the rate of assessment for each tax parcel is proposed to be the sum of (i) fifty dollars (\$50) per acre or portion thereof uniformly attributed to the tax parcel by the Polk County Property Appraiser at the time the District's assessment roll is certified for collection, plus (ii) \$5.00 to defray District notice, administrative and implementation costs, plus (iii) the costs of the Property Appraiser and Tax Collector allowed by law, plus (iv) adjustment for statutory discount for early payment necessarily associated with the use of the uniform method of collection.

Any non-ad valorem assessment imposed will by law only be imposed by the District Board, as an independent special district, and NOT by the Haines City Commission, nor the Polk County Board of Commissioners, nor the Polk County Property Appraiser, nor the Polk County Tax Collector. Any activity of the Property Appraiser or Tax Collector under the provisions of this process are purely ministerial.

The dollar amount attributed to each affected tax parcel in the District and other information concerning the proposed non-ad valorem assessment is being mailed and will also be available online at <http://hainescitywatercontroldistrict.com/> or accessible by public access computer terminal upon inquiry at the Haines City Library adjacent to the Haines City City Hall.

The amount of revenue the District expects to collect using the specific assessment rates described in this Notice, net of cost for statutory discount for early payment necessarily

associated with the use of the uniform method of collection (by law up to 4%) and statutory commissions and fees charged by the County constitutional offices of the Polk County Tax Collector and Polk County Property Appraiser (by law up to 2% for each), and the District's cost to partially defray associated roll development, advertising, implementation and administrative costs (\$5 per tax parcel) is approximated to be \$142,650; and, such revenue must be used exclusively to fund the associated budget for the District.

Payment of the subject non-ad valorem assessment is anticipated to be due and collected as a non-ad valorem assessment on the same bill as taxes to be mailed in early November 2018. The District will also work to provide the proposed amounts to be assessed for each parcel to the Polk County Property Appraiser by July 20, 2018 to include in the TRIM notices expected to be sent by that office in August, if possible, pursuant to s. 200.069, Florida Statutes. The collection process by the Polk County Tax Collector for non-ad valorem assessments of this nature is called the uniform method. General law requires that affected property owners be reminded that: Until paid, the District's non-ad valorem assessment will constitute a lien against assessed property equal in rank and dignity with the liens of all state, county, district, or municipal taxes and other non-ad valorem assessments. Assessments become delinquent in the same manner as for unpaid taxes, and failure to pay the upcoming assessment will cause a tax certificate to be issued against the property which may result in loss of title.

Thank-you for your review. You may find more information at <http://hainescitywatercontroldistrict.com/> The District's website is expected to be updated periodically this summer to share information and further inform you. Please note: The noticed rate of assessment herein can be decreased by the District Board, but by law the rate of the assessment noticed herein cannot be increased beyond that noticed without another mailed and published notice of this nature being provided by the District.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES NEEDING ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE HEARING SHOULD CONTACT THE DISTRICT SECRETARY AT MYHCWCD@GMAIL.COM OR HAINES CITY CLERK AT LEAST 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING AT (863) 421-9921.

TO BE PUBLISHED AT THE DIRECTION OF THE DISTRICT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Publish by or before June 28, 2018.