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Wildwood Wins Budget Award for Fifth Straight Year

Wildwood officials today announced the city has been named a Distinguished Budget Award winner by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its Fiscal Year 2023 budget. It is the fifth consecutive year the city has been so honored.

“Winning this award is something we strive to achieve each year,” said Cassandra Smith, Wildwood’s assistant city manager and chief financial officer. “It provides a rigorous framework and extensive list of criteria to ensure our budget is not only sound fiscally, but presented to the public in a format that is transparent and understandable.”

According to the GFOA, the program was developed in 1984 to assist local and state governments in preparing budget documents “of the very highest quality that reflect both the guidelines established by the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting and the GFOA’s best practices on budgeting.” The awards recognize entities that succeed in this area.

The program sets criteria requiring the budget to serve not only as an impeccable financial plan, but also an exceptional operations guide, policy document, and communication tool.

“It’s critical our constituents have access to this information,” commented Commissioner Joe Elliott. “It’s equally important they can understand it. Our city staff have deliberately and successfully taken steps over time to prepare and present very detailed information in a way that is user friendly.”

“I’m proud of the work we do here,” said Lynzey McClellan, assistant CFO and finance department director, who prepares and submits the budget. “Winning this award is a goal every year, but the requirements are very strict, so it is never guaranteed. It requires a great deal of input from all department heads, and I’m thankful for their cooperation and collaboration throughout the entire process.”

McClellan explained that financial integrity is of the utmost importance in her work as a public-sector manager, and is at the forefront of her daily work and planning.

“We strive to do the right thing and to be transparent in everything we do,” she said. “Receiving this honor is validation that we are living up to not only our own high standards, but those of financial professionals across North America.”

Wildwood’s approved budget can be found at www.wildwood-fl.gov/finance.

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