

**TOWN OF HARRISBURG, NORTH CAROLINA
COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP
HARRISBURG TOWN HALL
SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2016
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Steve Sciascia called the meeting to order.

PRESENT: Mayor Steve Sciascia; Mayor Pro-Tem Benita Conrad, Councilmen Chad Baucom, Christopher Barfield, Ron Smith, Rick Russo, Jeff Phillips

ABSENT: Councilman Rick Russo

1.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sciascia called the meeting to order.

2.

NEW BUSINESS

Fire Department Discussion:

Lee Connor presented the fire revenue/expense projection through 2026. Also discussed staffing/overtime numbers. Chief Dunn explained the proposal of doing away with Kelly days and how that would impact overtime hours. It would increase the amount of overtime for full-time personnel and less reliance on part-time personnel which can be unreliable at times. Minimum staffing is three employees on a truck.

Council approved 9 new firefighters last year, but then the Town received a grant for 15. It was all or nothing, so we hired 15. Council questioned why there was still a need for any overtime. Chief Dunn stated that he and Lee have now taken the overtime out of it. There is the potential that if there are multiple personnel out on a particular day we may have to shut a station down for a shift as there may not be enough money in the budget to bring in part-time personnel to cover for those who are out because the part-time dollars are reduced greatly in the proposed budget.

Discussion concerned what may happen when the grant runs out, and options for funding the additional staffing. There is the possibility of applying for another SAFER Grant to cover the 6 extra firefighters that we may lose when this grant runs out for another two years.

Other items discussed:

- Increase in the technology services line item – equipment replacement and radio technology. The amount should go down again next year.
- Vehicle lifespan numbers and how that is determined. Many times vehicles are transferred from one department to another when their usefulness is done in the first department.
- Potential lawn mower purchase for Station 3 – is there a possibility that Station 3 could share one of Parks and Recreation’s mowers? Also, this mower would not be used to the extent that other mowers in town would be so we could just go buy a regular riding mower for the station. This also led to a discussion on contracting out mowing around the entire town.
- Jackson Park Station – using this for storage. Goal is to build a storage building to house those things when we build Station 2. Currently this building is deed restricted for fire use, but Rich is looking into how long that restriction is. If the restriction runs out, we can sell it.

- Fire Service District
- Radios – can we be included in the County contract?

Council took a 5 minute recess.

Following the recess, the meeting resumed.

Council by consensus decided on a bonus amount for Lee Connor of \$7500 for his service as Interim Town Manager.

Chairs:

Last meeting we discussed purchasing new chairs for the Council Chambers. Original request was for \$12,500. We have a new option that would be for \$3,600. Discussion surrounded whether we need to buy new chairs or wait until the Facilities Committee makes a decision on whether the Town Hall is moving or not. Consensus was to wait on purchasing chairs for now.

Communications:

Professional Services:

- Brand Implementation – design of branded materials – have taken out the external portion of this and waiting on a quote for just the internal, portable items.
- Monthly Design Retainer – This is for a certain number of hours, and if we do not utilize all of those hours, we can carry them out for a longer period of time. Budget amount is based on 20 hours per month at this time, but we are getting a quote for less hours as well. Current contract with this company ends in June so we could try to negotiate a new rate.
- Broadcasting of meetings – New Town Manager Bobby Williams presented options for broadcasting our Council meetings. A retention policy for those videos and the original recordings was also discussed.
- Discussion of Seamless Docs to allow all Town forms to be filled out online. Needs more research. Bring back next year.
- Archive social – Needs more research – take out for this year.
- Photography – Can we reach out to local photographers or UNCC students to do some of this at a reduced cost? Can employees snap pictures at events – do we need professional pictures of events? What did we spend last year and where are those pictures? The \$4,000 should come out of the budget for now, and be discussed later.

Economic Development:

- Travel and Training – School of Government Classes
- Economic Incentive Funds – transferred to Capital Reserve so it can span multiple years.
- Advertising – how effective is this?
- Need to define what Economic Development success is for us and communicate what those expectations are.

Planning and Zoning:

- Travel and Training – School of Government classes. Some specifically for the Permit Tech to get that employee more ingrained into Planning and Zoning.
- Office Supplies – talked about process of ordering supplies – we order through a vendor that is selected each year based on pricing.
- Traffic Studies – these are the ones initiated by the Town per our new rules.
- Contracted Planning Services – amount estimated for help that he may need in the coming year.
- Land Use Plan Updates – working with the County on this as well.

Deputies:

- Vehicles – should we stick with using Chargers or go with another model? Also the consensus was to go to replacement using the same operating policy as the County. That would take the 2 new vehicles out of this budget.

Powell Bill:

- Lee distributed the list of streets in town that are the most in need of resurfacing. Lee brought up the idea of creating a vehicle tag fee to help get these projects done quicker. A \$25 tag fee would allow all of these to be done over a 3 year period by combining it with Powell Bill money. A lesser tag fee would stretch the timeline out. Consensus of Council was to defer this item to the next budget year. Lee will look at other savings in the budget to apply at least \$60,000 extra towards the resurfacing projects.

Parks and Recreation:

- Holding off on the \$25,000 for design on a new facility at this time based on the Facility Committee looking into facility needs as a whole.
- Proposed Maintenance Aide – Council would like to investigate the possibility of this being two part-time positions. Also would like to see what the MAPS Group comes back with as recommendations for the department. Take this out temporarily.
- Surveillance System – this would be for all three parks to reduce vandalism.
- Pressure Washer – should be able to share some equipment with Public Works. If they are both in need of it at the same time, Parks could rent equipment for the day.
- Council asked for analysis of program participants – how many are residents, how many are from out of town? Also check on how to better manage concessions.
- Phones – look into radios for maintenance staff.
- Contract with Windstream – we are working to get out of that contract because we can get a better deal and better service with Time Warner. If we can do that, the \$7,200 showing in the budget will go away.
- July 4th – increase due to the addition of more amusements. He is changing things up a bit this year, moving vendors around and adding more amusements.
- Capital Outlay – discussion of potential land purchases – there is some potential for purchasing land for parks in the next year. Consensus of Council was to leave the projected amount in the budget for now and discuss in more detail later.
- Field Groomer Replacement - \$20,000, was inadvertently left out. Should be added back in to the proposed budget.

Council then went through the following:

- General Fund Transfer and Contingency
- General Fund Capital Reserve Fund
- General Fund Economic Development Reserve Fund
- Recreation Capital Project Fund will go away for the time being because of the Parks and Recreation Facility is going away for now.
- Transportation Special Revenue Fund will go away for now because we will not be doing the Vehicle Tag fee this year.

Water/Sewer Rates:

- The cost of fixing the issue with flushing hydrants in Heatherstone was discussed. The cost is approximately \$36,000, but we need to find out if this is a one-time fix or if it will have to be done again. Directed staff to investigate and bring more information back to Council.
- The options for rate increases were presented at the April 16 meeting. Also discussed keeping the lower users at the same or similar rate so that the impact on them would be minimal. Council

suggested raising outside rates more than those for inside town customers. Based on that discussion, Lee presented new options. Consensus of Council was to defer this until Lee has more information concerning the outside commercial customers. The increased revenue would be used to fund projects in the Capital Improvement Plan for Water and Sewer.

3.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by consensus of Town Council.

Steven J. Sciascia, Mayor

ATTEST:

Janet Rackley, Town Clerk