

MINUTES  
BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
BUDGET WORK SESSION  
APRIL 12, 2016

Mayor Blair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Town Hall.

Attendance: Mayor William J. Blair III, Mayor Pro Tem Darryl Mills, Alderman Elizabeth King, Alderman Henry E. Miller III, and Alderman Lisa Weeks; together with Town Manager Timothy W. Owens and Town Clerk Sylvia J. Holleman.

**BUDGET SUMMARY TO DATE**

General Fund Budget Overview:

- Budget Summary to Date
  - Draft Budget Amount: \$11,601,255
  - Amended Budget Amount \$10,766,360
  - FY15/16 Budget: \$10,534,416
- Used \$61,714 in reserves to balance the budget
- CIP Spending in the Budget
  - Planning Software \$ 10,000
  - Police Vehicles \$ 70,000
  - West Salisbury \$ 41,845
  - Dump Truck \$ 30,000
  - Front End Loader \$ 98,000 (will cut this out of the budget)
- Funds put in the CIP \$ 958,000 (\$500,000 for coastal storm reduction)

Mr. Owens noted that the focus of this meeting would be on the General Fund; then focus on Water and Sewer at the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**GENERAL FUND REVENUES**

Changes to Requested for FY2017:

- Local Sales Tax Art 39 \$ 550,000
- Half Cent Sales Tax Art 42 \$ 275,000
- Mixed Drink Surcharge \$ 80,000
- Recreation Revenues \$ 250,000
- Transfer from GFCIP \$ 259,345
- Appropriated Fund Balance \$ 61,714

**GOVERNING BODY (104100)**

Mr. Owens gave an overview of each account. A brief discussion followed regarding the Turtle Monitoring Program administered by Ms. Nancy Fahey.

**GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (104200)**

Mr. Owens said everything in red had been amended. Mayor Blair expressed the need to put the operations audit and pay and classification study on hold until the new department heads could get settled. He said he would pull it out of the budget and once the Board decides to do it, staff can put out an RFP with a scope of work. When asked who would do the personnel policy, Mr. Owens said we would probably ship that out to a couple of different firms.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (104500)**

When asked if this department was a “catch all” for all departments, Mrs. Ivins said it was. Following a brief discussion regarding computers, she verified that there were twenty computers all together. Alderman Weeks asked if the Planning and Inspections Software had been taken out of the budget. Mr. Owens explained that we would be able to do that this year as part of the Tyler switchover.

**PLANNING AND INSPECTIONS (104900)**

Questions arose about the Temp Employee line item for \$14,000. When asked when that department had a temp, Building Inspector Bill Squires said it was when Ms. Hufham came over from Public Works three or more years ago. Planner I Zach Steffey noted the steady increase in the number of building permits. He explained how they have to shut the department down when they are all three out of the office and how that puts a burden on the rest of the staff in Town Hall. He said having somebody to manage that logistically would allow the department to offer better service to the community. Mr. Steffey said he has to do the minutes for the Planning Board and Historic Landmark Commission and he felt that time could be used doing something else like grant applications. Mr. Owens stated that since Mr. Squires would be leaving to fill the position of Public Works Director, this department may need temporary help for a little while. Mayor Blair expressed concern that the current volume of permits would not be sustained. Mr. Squires said that is why they were asking for a temp and not a permanent position. Mayor Blair said the Board would be willing to consider a feasible plan but not in perpetuity. He said if the volume stays heavy enough, he thought the Board would agree that they need help. Mr. Owens noted that they were looking at 19 hours per week mainly to help with minutes and filing.

**PUBLIC WORKS – FLEET MAINTENANCE (105001)**

Following a brief discussion regarding the actual need for a second storage container for tires and miscellaneous items, Mr. Owens said he would delete that for now and if there was a need for one for next year, staff would bring it back. When asked if the \$20,000 for the garage expansion needed to be taken out, Mr. Owens said he would just leave it where it was for now.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT (105100)**

Mr. Owens stated that he had looked at the salaries and wages line item and reduced that from \$1,356,133 to \$1,215,000. He said the only major change was the Training Incentive Program that was previously discussed by the Board – regarding an officer’s salary being bumped up 5% during the time he is training another officer. A brief discussion developed regarding ATVs and replacement of an in-car video camera. Mayor Pro Tem Mills asked Chief House to review the breakdown of the money allocated for ‘other equipment’. The Board also discussed the use and disposition of the 22 department vehicles. Mr. Owens said from now on, the Board would see two vehicles a year. Chief House said he would ask for four in 2018 because two had been bumped up from last year. He said last year, we starting assigning vehicles and that cut down how often we have to replace them since they don’t run 24/7 anymore. He noted that we were spending about \$1,200 to \$1,300 per year to repair vehicles; that was down to about \$600. When asked where the sale of vehicles shows up in the budget, Finance Officer Erica Walters said it would be in the ‘Sale of Assets’ revenue line item.

**PARKING MANAGEMENT (105102)**

Following a brief overview of the Parking Budget by Mr. Owens, Mayor Blair requested a midsummer year-to-date expense report for parking to see how they are tracking and managing their budget.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT (105300)**

Captain Pugh gave a brief explanation of the volunteer stipend and how it is calculated; \$15 for coming to a call or to a drill. He then gave an overview of the intern program and the organizational structure of the department. Alderman Weeks asked about the \$20,000 set aside for an EMS truck and noted that we already had \$65,000 set aside for that. Mr. Owens said he didn't think we needed to purchase a new one yet. He suggested adding that \$20,000 to the aerial pumper and making that \$95,000 instead of \$75,000. There was Board consensus to do that.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (105301)**

Mr. Owens gave a brief overview of the department. When asked what a PIO was, Captain Pugh replied, "Public Information Officer and that's Katie (Ryan)."

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – OCEAN RESCUE (105302)**

Ocean Rescue Director Dave Baker gave an overview of the departmental staffing and salary structure as follows: "Starting April 1 until the season starts on the Friday before Memorial Day, we ramp things up and bring in lieutenants; these are the individuals that come with the highest medical experience and also the most seniority and understanding of the beach. Those individuals are presently started off at \$11.50 per hour and they increase 25 cents per year to a maximum of \$12.50. Right now, everyone is maxing out because there are senior guards that have been here over 7 years. With the lifeguards, they average 17 weeks of work for a 46-hour workweek. Monday through Thursday, there are 17 people that work – that's the thirteen stands, three people on ATVs, and one of the stands is doubled up depending on the crowd. Then, on the weekend, we bump that number up significantly. They start off at \$10.00 per hour and increase up to \$10.50. If they have EMT certification, they get paid an extra 25 cents per hour." Mayor Blair asked why the proposed budget showed a starting salary for lifeguards of \$10.50 when he thought they were requesting a 25 cents per hour increase which would make it \$10.25. Captain Pugh said it had been \$10.00 per hour last year and they were proposing to start them at \$10.50 per hour this year. Mayor Blair noted that a new lifeguard could come in with his EMT and he would start at \$10.75. Mr. Baker explained that it was getting harder to get full time seasonal lifeguards so they are having to get part time seasonal lifeguards. He said that was actually beneficial in a lot of ways because they are Wilmington firefighters and paramedics that bring an emergency service mindset to the beach. He stated that people are balking at \$10.00 an hour because they're having to work another job. Mr. Owens said, "If we want to consider this, I would say come in at \$10.25 the first year and be consistent throughout and everything else is bumped up 25 cents. A first year lieutenant is now \$11.25 so that would be \$11.50." Mayor Blair asked if we wanted all of our lifeguards to be EMT certified because that was not a requirement to be a lifeguard. Mr. Baker replied, "Absolutely. I'd like to think that we provide some of the best service in North Carolina, if not the entire east coast. EMT is very important for the beach patron. Should you or your family fall out, these people have the experience to determine what is wrong with a person and help initiate the proper care that is going to save a life.

Mayor Blair expressed concern with how to plug this into an ever decreasing TDA as he felt our percentage of TDA funds was not going up congruent with everything else. He said he thought the information was confusing and he would like to see it in a format that would be easy to follow including the impact to the TDA. He said, "Bring that information back and we will let Mr. Wessell look into that. We can leave it like it is until you give us something better." Alderman Weeks stated that she thought Mr. Baker was trying to attract more than part time employees. Mr. Baker replied, "Correct. We have found that those individuals that work into October are the only ones we have to be concerned about for unemployment. We feel comfortable with \$5,000 in the budget for unemployment." Mr. Owens said, "We will let Mr. Wessell look at it." Mrs. Walters noted that if they are seasonal employees, they can't work past September.

Mayor Blair asked if the captain's vehicle was still in the budget. Mr. Owens said it was but it could be moved to the CIP. Mayor Blair noted that we bought a truck last year. Mr. Baker said, "The vehicle that was replaced this year will become a utility vehicle to get our equipment to the beach. Everything is on a five-year plan. It may not hurt this year or next year but eight to ten years from now, we will have a vehicle that does not work." Mayor Blair asked if the Board wanted to do full funding now or half and half. Mayor Pro Tem Mills said he thought it should be half and half. Mayor Blair said, "Drop it down to the CIP until we can fund it. I worry about the cost of lifeguards because of the TDA." Mr. Baker said, "When you go to court for people, one of the things they ask is what is your maintenance plan and what is your replacement plan. I like to be able to state that five years is my professional opinion. I understand what you all are doing but I need to speak and state that this is for the safety of everybody."

#### **PUBLIC WORKS – ADMINISTRATION (105550)**

Following a brief discussion regarding travel allowance, Mr. Owens explained that it was just a stipend for people driving their own vehicles. He said it was the same thing with the phone allowance. When asked about the blanks in Public Works Administration, Mayor Blair asked if staff would provide a new sheet with the blanks filled in. Mr. Owens explained that he was waiting for the new department head to come onboard before redoing the sheet. Alderman Weeks said it would also be a good idea to revisit the stipend policy at some point. Mayor Blair agreed.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS – BUILDING MAINTENANCE (105559)**

Mr. Owens stated that he had made a lot of changes in this department based on actuals. He then reviewed some of the upcoming projects and noted that a lot of the HVAC projects were placed in the CIP. When Alderman Miller asked about the walkover replacement, Mr. Owens said it was for walkovers and where we have crossovers; it won't cost a lot to remove them. Alderman Weeks asked if the shower funding had been taken out. Mr. Owens said it had been taken out for this year because they may find another way to do it. Mayor Blair questioned the van replacement. Mr. Babin explained that it was to replace a 2006 cleaning van.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS – STREETS (105600)**

Mr. Owens noted that the amount for street lights may go down a little next year because of the new LED lights. He said under contracted services, he had taken out the resurfacing of Keel Street and left in Short Street and Jasmine Place. Mayor Blair said he would rather do Keel than Short Street.

Mr. Owens said, “If you don’t use all of your Powell Bill money, it stays in there for a while. You can also use that for other things. We will take out Short Street and load back in Keel Street.” Mayor Blair said, “As long as we don’t lose it.” Mrs. Walters explained that it would go into one of our reserve accounts.

Alderman Weeks referenced the resurfacing of the Salisbury parking lot and said she would hate to do that and not address the bike lane. Mr. Owens stated that he had spoken with the NCDOT and they did not like the bike plan. He said they can come in and resurface it and we can restripe it; they may allow ‘sharrows’. Alderman Weeks asked that we look at some cheap options before we resurface.

**PUBLIC WORKS – SANITATION (105601)**

Mr. Owens said, “We have \$75,000 in there for a load packer; that will cost about \$190,000. I think we should delete the frontend loader and purchase the dump truck.” Mayor Pro Tem Mills asked why we were paying more per hour for temps in this department. Mr. Owens explained that our contract with Power Temp had gone up. He noted that they drug test and do background checks. He said he would check to see if we could get that done any cheaper. Alderman Weeks asked if the tipping fee was \$52 and Mr. Owens said that was correct.

**PARKS AND RECREATION – PROGRAMS (106200)**

Following a brief overview of the department, Mayor Pro Tem Mills referenced the afterschool counselors and asked what kind of counseling they did. Program Supervisor Katie Ryan said it was babysitting and help with homework. Alderman Weeks asked if anything jumped out when they went through the fees and charges. Ms. Ryan suggested the possibility of charging \$1 per participant for the larger runs like the City of Wilmington does. Alderman Miller expressed the need to be comparable to Wilmington. Ms. Ryan noted that Wilmington does not charge a special event fee. Alderman Weeks said we could reinvest that back into the department.

**PARKS AND RECREATION – PARKS MAINTENANCE (106201)**

Following a brief overview of the department, Alderman King asked when the tennis courts were last resurfaced. Mr. Morigerato said it had been five years. Mayor Blair asked how much that would cost. Mr. Owens said it would be \$80,000. Alderman Weeks said maybe they could talk about the whole fee schedule at the next meeting.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Mr. Owens said the next meeting was scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. to review things that had already been discussed and then focus on water and sewer.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 5:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia J. Holleman  
Town Clerk