

**AT A BUDGET WORK SESSION OF THE DUMFRIES TOWN COUNCIL, HELD ON APRIL 30, 2013, AT 7:00 P.M., IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 17755 MAIN STREET, DUMFRIES, VIRGINIA:**

**THERE WERE PRESENT:** Mayor Gerald Foreman  
Vice-Mayor Willie Toney (arrived after citizen comment)  
Charles Brewer  
Kristin Forrester  
Helen Reynolds  
Gwen Washington  
Derrick R. Wood (arrived after roll call)  
Daniel Taber, Town Manager

**THERE WERE ABSENT:** None

**IN RE: CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Mayor Foreman called the meeting to order. Dawn Hobgood, Town Clerk, took roll call.

**IN RE: MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER AND REFLECTION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

There was a moment of silent prayer and reflection, then all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States.

**IN RE: CITIZEN COMMENT PERIOD**

There were no citizen comments.

**IN RE: DISCUSSION ITEM(S)  
A. FY14 PROPOSED BUDGET – DAN TABER**

Mayor Foreman explained that rather than have the Department Heads give an overview he would ask each Council Member to give input on what they were looking for in the budget and then go through the budget department by department at which time comments could be made on any specific line item.

Mayor Foreman gave the following list of things he wanted to see in the budget.

- Real estate tax rate dropped from \$.3133 to \$.2733 (proposed budget \$.2833)
- Vehicle license fee reduced by \$2.00 (\$27.00 to \$25.00)
- Cigarette tax be decreased by \$.05 (from \$.60 to \$.55)
- Stormwater management fee be decreased by \$2.00 per resident (currently \$30.00)

Ms. Washington wanted a blinking light at Dumfries Elementary School and a flashing/moving event sign in front of Town Hall that are not in the proposed budget.

A brief discussion was had about using or getting funds for a blinking light at Dumfries Elementary School from the safety improvements that have been scheduled to Cameron Street, asking Prince William County to assist, or from state highway maintenance funds.

Mr. Taber noted the sign in front of Town Hall was being taken care of out of the current year's budget.

Mr. Brewer liked the \$.03 reduction. He wanted to see the Town cover the cost of health insurance for the employees 100 percent, which amounts to approximately \$28,000. He mentioned the meals tax has been \$.04 for a while. For each penny collected, the Town receives approximately \$157,000. An increase from half a penny to \$.01 would be plenty to cover the cost of the insurance. He questioned only making \$500 in interest on the Town's investments.

Mr. Taber noted there is nothing out there getting a better rate.

Mr. Brewer asked if that was based on the LGIP (local government investment pool) and whether the Town had any other investments.

Mr. Taber confirmed it is the LGIP.

Mr. Brewer asked if the Town was still doing the sweep account.

Retta Ladd, Treasurer, noted Town was not and just has the LGIP account.

Mr. Taber would look into other options.

Mr. Brewer pointed out grants were being figured into the budget.

Mr. Taber explained this is called a zero sum. In other words, if the Town does not get the grant the expense on the other side is not made. You have to show it as income and an expense.

Mr. Brewer recalled that being a recommendation from the auditor.

Mr. Taber agreed.

Mr. Brewer agreed with the reduction in the cigarette tax rate.

Ms. Forrester agreed with a \$.04 reduction in the real estate tax; however, did not agree with the reduction in the cigarette tax rate noting the reduction could be taken in other areas.

Ms. Reynolds agreed with lowering taxes; however, she thought it should be done with a reduction of \$ .02 this year and another \$.02 next year since Council is looking at picking up expenses in other areas like paying for the employees' health insurance 100 percent.

Mr. Toney would support a decrease in taxes; however, he needed to get an idea of what the assessments are.

Council held a discussion about when the taxes were raised for the equalization rate. It was questioned what Prince William County (PWC) has done with the assessments and whether the values increased. PWC is reporting a mean increase in property values, which means some property values increased and some decreased. The property values have gone up approximately four percent in PWC and some property values have increased in Dumfries. It was pointed out the comparison needs to be done from the year when the rates were increased for the equalization rate to now to determine the difference. It was noted that the cost of living has gone up too.

**BUDGET DISCUSSION - REVENUE**

Mayor Foreman asked when the fee schedule would be changed for the landfill. The adjustment fee for recycling.

Mr. Taber clarified the Town is under a current contract for recycling until 2015.

Mayor Foreman explained the fee he is talking about is the recycling fee for the landfill.

Mr. Taber explained the Town is collecting the fees on the debris landfill that it can right now. An assessment is being done to determine the full scope of what is going on at the landfill. There has been an increase in the fees collected under the business, professional, occupational license (BPOL) from the landfill.

Mayor Foreman noted there would not be an adjustment or change to the fee schedule for any of the businesses at the landfill.

Mr. Taber noted that would have to come before Council.

Mayor Foreman asked about the roadside food vendor fee.

Mr. Taber noted a decision has not been made concerning that either.

**BUDGET DISCUSSION – EXPENDITURES**

**Governing Body**

No comments were made.

**Administration**

Ms. Forrester suggested removing the \$2,500 for marketing under administration.

**Economic Development**

Zero budgeted.

**Information Technology (IT)**

Ms. Forrester suggested taking out the \$10,000 for the part time IT Specialist.

Ms. Reynolds disagreed since there is only one individual doing the job with no backup. She asked if the \$38,000 in capital outlay was for a server.

Mr. Taber explained the money is in there because something needs to be done; however, he was not sure that was going to be used specifically for a server. Once the budget is approved, a request for proposal will go out to determine what is needed to improve the security and reliability of information on the server.

Ms. Reynolds asked what the \$20,000 for professional contracts included.

Teresa Johnson, IT Manager, noted it was for maintenance contracts for software and hardware being used. She gave the following list of items.

- Norton
- Permit Manager
- DOTGOV
- Air Cards for the Police Department
- Warranties for the server and computers
- Maintenance for the camera system
- Ustream account
- Blackboard Connect
- Granicus

Ms. Reynolds asked how much was in the current budget.

Ms. Johnson noted it was \$64,000.

It was clarified that the items listed above come out of the maintenance contracts line item.

Ms. Johnson explained the professional contracts would be for the installation of two new cameras, switcher for streaming the Council meetings at Noon, and the installation of the exchange server.

Mr. Wood asked if Ms. Johnson was unable to be at a meeting who the backup person would be and whether cross training could be done.

Mr. Taber noted that individuals who are in charge of other Boards and Commissions have been shown how to turn the equipment on to record, so some degree of cross training has been done. Some things Ms. Johnson can do from home.

Ms. Johnson clarified that Morgan Brim, Planner/Zoning Administrator, was trained on how to turn the equipment on and record the Planning Commission meetings. Cross training could be done; however, that would be adding additional responsibilities to someone else. She adjusts her schedule around the meetings.

Mr. Brewer asked what Council would get for \$10,000.

Mr. Taber indicated that would bring someone in if something were to occur. This would not be a full time position, but a support position should a failure occur or it would take more than one person. He noted it would be an hourly rate.

Mr. Brewer asked why the capital outlay doubled.

Mr. Taber mentioned it was for the server.

Mr. Brewer pointed out that between the maintenance and professional contracts the Town is spending almost \$100,000.

Mr. Taber agreed. He explained the Town does not have an IT Department like the larger jurisdictions to the capability of installing cable, etc. He noted it would be imprudent to tie up salary money for that. It is more economically feasible to do it with contracted services. The small increase would be for the maintenance contracts related to the server.

Mr. Brewer asked who the Town has maintenance contracts with other than Southern Software.

Ms. Johnson mentioned Permit Manager that the Public Works Department uses. The antivirus software, Norton, and the other ones previously mentioned. The two newest items added were Granicus and the camera system.

Mr. Brewer asked how much the Granicus cost.

Ms. Johnson stated the monthly fee is \$549.

Ms. Washington suggested changing the part time IT Specialist description since it is not an actual position.

Mr. Taber suggested changing it to hourly if it stays in the budget.

Ms. Reynolds noted the term would be on-call. She thought it should be more money, because when something goes down it shuts down all communications.

Mayor Foreman noted the sound system needs to be fixed.

Mr. Taber stated the sound system is being replaced in the current year's budget and the work will start in the next couple of weeks.

Mayor Foreman asked Ms. Johnson how many hours she spends a week on computer trouble shooting.

Ms. Johnson stated 35 to 40 hours. There are times she is at work until 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Foreman asked how many times Ms. Johnson has called on the maintenance or professional contracts for things that she could not fix.

Ms. Johnson noted a lot.

Mayor Foreman asked what training was proposed for next year.

Ms. Johnson mentioned training for the exchange server and preparing for computer upgrades.

Mayor Foreman pointed out that during the mid-year budget review there was an increase of \$20,000 and the FY14 budget increased by an additional \$38,000 for a total increase of \$58,000. He noted a lot of money has been thrown into information technology in the past year. He asked what Council would see.

Mr. Taber noted a new microphone system and voting display board would be installed. He explained most of the cost is equipment and installation.

Mayor Foreman pointed out that in FY11, the budget was approximately \$85,000, and in FY14, the proposed budget is approximately \$248,000. The Council has a fiduciary responsibility to the citizens to watch. He thought there needed to be scrutiny and maybe something could be put off until next year. He mentioned that FY15 should not have a \$250,000 budget request.

Ms. Johnson pointed out that when the position was created the telecommunications, air cards and cell phones, were in each individual departments budget. The central processing units (CPUs) were purchased prior to her department being created which are now five years old.

Mayor Foreman understands COTS (commercial off the shelf) and IT. He is allowing the IT Specialist to talk because that is her job; however, one of his jobs is doing the budget and there comes a point when an investment starts paying off. He is not saying that \$248,000 is a bad investment. What he is saying is that a 4.2 million dollar budget cannot sustain a \$248,000 IT budget for the next four years while telling the citizens that only two cents can be given back because Council wants to give raises, and do this, this, and this. There has to come a point when it starts paying off.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

Mr. Brewer asked why the line item for Merchant Park was increased by \$1,000.

Mr. Taber explained that as facilities get older you have to plan for potential expenses.

Greg Tkac, Public Works Director, noted there are several historic trees in Merchant Park that are in need of some extensive pruning.

Mr. Brewer asked why the Community Center budget was being decreased by \$1,000.

Mr. Tkac noted the goals identified for the Community Center and maintenance have been decreased.

Mr. Brewer asked what was going to be done at the Community Center that is going to cost \$4,000.

Mr. Tkac mentioned painting, landscaping, and an information sign that is anticipated to be installed in front of the Community Center to announce the events the Town is sponsoring.

Mr. Brewer asked if the sign was coming out of the current budget.

Mr. Taber noted it was coming out of the current budget. He explained there would be additional signage for the historical significance of the Community Center.

Mr. Brewer asked if there was any type of plan and a specific cost for the \$40,000 budgeted for Ginn Park.

Mr. Taber was going to digress to the different phases.

Mr. Brewer understood the phasing. What he was looking for is what the total cost is of everything that is planned to be placed in the Park.

Mr. Taber asked if Mr. Brewer was asking about the \$40,000.

Mr. Brewer wanted to know what exactly was going to be placed in the Park and how much it was going to cost to complete it. He pointed out that when you build a road you know how much you are going to pay to complete it.

Mr. Tkac explained there is a master plan that was developed several years back that includes an amphitheater, a pavilion, bathroom facilities, and an office. There are preliminary budget estimates of around \$260,000 that would include water lines and the pavilion. Staff was not sure what to anticipate for the amphitheater; however, the capital improvement plan (CIP) allows \$40,000 per fiscal year to be earmarked for Ginn Park for the future build out. Goals for FY13 include playground equipment and the like. Every expenditure will go through Council.

Mr. Brewer asked if the \$260,000 was the total expenditure from when the Park was purchased or from this point on.

Mr. Tkac noted it was from this point on.

Mr. Brewer questioned the additional \$260,000.

Mr. Tkac noted that was today's dollars.

Mr. Brewer asked if when the land was purchased whether there was any idea of how much this plan was going to cost.

Mr. Tkac noted there are some very ambitious goals.

Mr. Brewer mentioned that everyone has ambitious goals; however, he was looking at the total cost. Something like this, you do not want to piece meal and drag it along for 15 years. If it is done sooner, rather than later, and can be done cheaper with the current dollar, he did not see why to prolong the thing. He was not a fan of phasing. He wants to see the total cost of the park. He pointed out that \$40,000 is not going to get much.

Mr. Tkac suggested using the time aspect would allow staff the time to look at how the park is being used and be certain that the elements are the correct elements and what the Town truly needs. He thought it would be premature to borrow money to build something without identifying the way the park will naturally be used just by being there. There may be other needs that the current plan does not address.

Mr. Brewer asked if a plan has been made and approved then should the plan not be moved forward to get it done.

Mr. Tkac stated that was a decision Council needs to make.

Mr. Brewer asked if there was an architectural plan, not conceptual, of the Park.

Mr. Tkac indicated there is a schematic of the Park itself and an architectural plan that shows the pavilion, which is how the estimate was derived.

Mr. Brewer asked about the amphitheater.

Mr. Tkac explained there are some preliminary figures on grading; however, since we do not know exactly how it will be built a cost estimate cannot be done.

Mr. Brewer pointed out the Town does not have a total cost because the Town does not know what is going to be in the Park.

Mr. Tkac stated there is a cost based on what the future goals are.

Mr. Wood noted the budget was decreased by \$280,000 since the \$305,000 in the FY11 budget was not spent.

Mr. Tkac clarified the money was spent; however, it was a grant and not general funds that were spent in FY11 for the purchase of the land of approximately \$260,000.

Ms. Ladd clarified the grant was paid from PWC directly to the property owner and did not go through the Town.

Ms. Washington recalled a discussion where a decision was made that when a new budget was done it would be identified what the project was the funds would be budgeted for, because the reason for the discussion was the need to appropriate more funds to the Park.

Mr. Tkac recalled the same conversation; however, he recalled another discussion that was had, at length, about the CIP where the \$40,000 was identified over the next five years. He noted there is an immediate need, desire, request, from citizens that include playground equipment. Roughly, \$21,000 was requested for playground equipment, two additional bbq grills, several park benches, and two trashcans for the \$40,000 being budgeted.

Mr. Taber added the discussion included phasing versus fiscal year. The phase the Council is in now includes playground equipment. The money for FY13 has been expended. There is a need to continue with additional playground equipment and part of the funding for FY14 would go toward that. At some point Council will get a recommendation for Phase III, which might be to build the pavilion that might cost \$200,000. Would that would signify is that with the CIP and the current budgeting it would take five years to accumulate the necessary funds to build and complete Phase III. The phase does not necessarily follow the fiscal year budget. The recommendation is to use the money budgeted to complete Phase II by purchasing the additional playground equipment.

Ms. Washington understood all that; however, what her concern was is the need to come back and ask for additional funds and having the Council look as if they were not for the park.

### **Public Safety**

Mr. Brewer asked Chief Forker where the 599 money is at this year.

Chief Forker had not gotten an update yet.

Mr. Brewer asked how much the reduction was from FY13 to FY12.

Ms. Ladd stated the amount stayed the same.

Mayor Foreman asked what the status was on funding for the school resource officer (SRO) in Dumfries Elementary with PWC.

Chief Forker spoke with the grant writer and the Town would not qualify based on the SRO position being placed in the budget already.

Mayor Foreman noted the SRO for the first year would be roughly \$125,900 and every year thereafter \$65,621.

Chief Forker did not have the final figure because he did not have the salary for the officer. For the supplies, gun, and everything the officer needs the figure would come to \$60,290 plus the salary and after that it would just be the salary plus benefits.

Ms. Reynolds asked why the budget would be lower this year for a senior officer.

Mr. Taber explained the individual is on military duty and the Town only pays the difference between the salary, before going on duty, and what the military pays.

Mayor Foreman asked when the Council would receive the actuals for the FY12 annual operating budget.

Ms. Ladd received an email from Mr. Johnson, CPA, stating she would have them in a couple of days.

Mayor Foreman asked that an effort be made to get the actuals for next year's budget discussions.

Mr. Brewer asked if the Town was funding the Christmas in Dumfries program.

Chief Forker explained the Christmas in Dumfries is funded by donations.

### **Street Maintenance**

Mayor Foreman asked why the miscellaneous line item increased by \$500.

Mr. Tkac has always paid for signs, signposts, and the hardware from the miscellaneous line item. The goal for FY14 is to upgrade a majority of the signage. The Manual on Uniformed Traffic Control Devices has called for fluorescent green for crosswalks and school signage.

Mayor Foreman mentioned the transportation bill that recently passed and talking with other localities the money is not supposed to be in the budget. He asked the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTa) and the Commonwealth Transportation Board whether the money was going to be coming from PWC or the State.

Mr. Taber noted the money will be coming from PWC and a formula has been established. Calls have been made to see if an approximate figure could be provided.

Mayor Foreman mentioned the question needs to be asked if it will be a disbursement once a year or twice, etc. The other thing is the money can only be spent on new projects. He asked if the Town has borrowed money from the Tripoli Heights Project bond.

Mr. Taber confirmed the Town has.

Mayor Foreman explained the definition for the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is not planned or applied for a loan or borrowed the money, but if you got a dollar or spent any money, it was no longer a new project.

Mr. Brewer asked when the contract was signed for solid waste.

Mr. Tkac stated that was in the Public Works budget; however, it was signed in 2010.

Mr. Brewer stated that was for a fixed amount.

Mr. Tkac noted it was for a fixed amount with the option for yearly increases that are negotiated.

Mr. Brewer asked what the purpose was for the increase.

Mr. Tkac noted that was one reason. There was a fuel price adjustment.

It was clarified that the Council was on another budget and had not gotten to the Public Works budget.

### **Community Development**

Mr. Taber advised the \$20,000 under professional contract is the second half of the Comprehensive Plan that Council approved.

### **Public Works**

No comments were made.

### **Stormwater Management**

Mr. Toney asked what budget the contract is for Olde Towne Landscaping is in.

Mr. Tkac noted the Town contracts for services under Building and Grounds, Street Maintenance, Public Works, and Stormwater Management for various duties.

Mr. Toney asked for specifics.

Mr. Tkac stated they are contracted to act as an extension of staff when needed. Snow removal and stormwater management. They fix failed pipe structures, outfalls, clean ditches, and things of that nature.

Mr. Taber explained these items require heavy equipment that the Town does not have.

### **Community Services**

Mr. Brewer asked about the \$1,750 budgeted for a Farmers' Market Director.

Mr. Taber explained that due to limited staff there is a need for a part-time individual with no benefits to run the Farmers' Market when it is open. The rate of pay is \$12.00 an hour. He pointed out that to pay a current staff member the overtime is not cost effective.

Cydny Neville, Community Services Director, noted that it is budgeted just in case the Town does not receive the WalMart grant that has been funding the program.

Ms. Forrester suggested eliminating the printed newsletter and providing it online.

Ms. Reynolds pointed out that not everyone has a computer.

Ms. Forrester suggested bi-annually.

Mr. Taber pointed out that a survey was done. He asked what the results were.

Mayor Foreman indicated the results were that people wanted a printed copy.

Ms. Neville mentioned the number of copies made could be cut back that are available at Town Hall.

Mayor Foreman was going to suggest cutting back to every four or six months. He was on board for it being online and just have copies for distribution at Town Hall. He noted the Town just needs to get it out on time.

Mr. Brewer did not understand the rise in cost for all of the programs. There are line items that had a zero budget amount in FY12 and are now being budgeted at \$5,000.

Ms. Neville noted the events are getting bigger every time.

Ms. Ladd explained that all of the events at one time were in the programs line item; however, they are now being broken out to each individual event.

Ms. Neville noted the Christmas Parade includes a Christmas Tree Lighting and a block party at the end of the parade.

Mr. Brewer was looking at eight events costing the Town \$25,900. He felt there were things that could be cut.

Mr. Taber explained that you would want to build in a reserve of some sort; however, there is \$3,500 in the miscellaneous programs that could be cut.

Ms. Neville gave the following examples of miscellaneous programs that supplies are purchased for out of the \$3,500.

- Self-Defense Class – Police Department
- Financial Education Program
- Healthy Herat Symposium
- Bike-To-Work Week

Mr. Toney noted the summer employment program has \$5,000 budgeted. He recalled a conversation had at the last meeting and it was the consensus of the group to employee 15

individuals whether it be an intern or employment program. He wondered if the amount should be higher.

Ms. Neville explained that would be up to Council.

Mr. Taber advised the discussion was continued to the next work session to decide which program would be implemented. He pointed out that if the intern program was decided on there is only enough staff to handle five or six individuals. He noted if Council decides to go the other way then there certainly can be additional money budgeted for the program.

Mr. Toney pointed out the budget for the programs decreased by \$2,000 from FY12. He noted the programs have been expanded, have more participation, and are getting grander and grander.

Mayor Foreman noted the events being scheduled are not only serving the citizens of the Town, but they are also serving Triangle, Graham Park, Quantico, Montclair, and Southbridge. Registration for the parade is free and something to consider for this fiscal year is a \$5.00 entrance fee, a nominal fee. The businesses and residents of the Town would be free. He did not think that people would not participate because of a \$5.00 fee, especially since more than \$5.00 is being spent on a plaque and the after party. This would offset the cost a little.

Mr. Wood liked the exposure the events were getting the Town. He liked that the events were being expanded and did not think that \$5.00 was too much to pay. He felt the more people who participate in the parade brings people to the Town.

Ms. Washington felt the image of the Town was really changing. She thought that before Council starts cutting the budget that the citizens get a chance to give input by sending out random surveys.

### **Boards and Commissions**

Mr. Wood asked if a line item could be added for the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Mr. Taber noted the line item would not have an impact on the FY14 budget.

Seeing no objections the Mayor indicated the line item would be added.

### **Non-Departmental**

Zero budgeted.

Mr. Taber stated this is the local government investment pool (LGIP) and nothing was budgeted; however, Council discussed a strategy for mid-year next year, so there is no need to confuse today's issue with that.

Mr. Wood wanted to see a line item added here for Parks and Recreation. He noted there has not been a place earmarked for programming of the parks and would like to have \$25,000 set aside for summer concerts, tournaments, refereed programs, Town sponsored runs, etc.

Mayor Foreman questioned Mr. Wood wanting a line item added here.

Mr. Wood explained he brought it up because the discussion is on non-departmental and Parks and Recreation is a non-departmental item.

Mr. Brewer pointed out none of the other Boards and Commissions has a Council Member sitting on them. He does not believe that Council should be sitting on any of them. He noted the Council is not putting any money into the LGIP for the Town, yet Council is going to put \$25,000 into Parks and Recreation. He could not agree with that and does not support his tax dollars being spent that way. This is why he stated at the beginning that the Council needed to look at what the Town needs versus what the Council wants.

A brief discussion was held about the surplus left over from FY12 and that approximately \$180,000 of the over \$300,000 was placed in the LGIP account. It was noted that any money that was not earmarked for a specific item would have rolled back into the general fund.

Mr. Toney supported his tax dollars going toward keeping people busy, especially the youth. He felt you needed to invest in the future; otherwise, you will pay for it on the other end. This is the first generation of adults raising children whose life expectancy is lower than ours is.

Ms. Washington thought if there is some surplus money the Council should look at utilizing some for the youth. It is a lot easier to train a child than to reform an adult. You cannot do anything for free anymore. She thought the \$25,000 is a great place to start. The Council is going to decide what programs are going to occur; however, you have to have funding in place in order to make recommendations.

Mr. Brewer noted that idle minds cause trouble. He did not feel that building a basketball court or a checker table put them to work, college, or created better citizens.

Mayor Foreman pointed out this year's budget increased \$393,000 from last year's budget with additional debt service of \$174,500. There is going to be a Commission chaired by a Council Member, which is a first. He supports the Commission; however, if Council is going to budget \$25,000 there needs to be a narrative as to how the money is going to be used. The Council has to answer for the \$25,000 to the citizens. A miscellaneous \$1,500 in the budget is probably okay. A miscellaneous \$5,000 is somewhat hard, but \$25,000 with no narrative is hard. He would not stand

in the way if Council decides on the \$25,000, but he would recommend the Parks and Recreation Commission get a charter. The Parks and Recreation Commission should be working with the Events Committee. There has also been discussion about having the Ginn Memorial Park Committee transfer to the Parks and Recreation Commission. He went over the events that the Town and non-profit organizations already have established. He mentioned all the volunteers the Town already has.

Ms. Forrester agreed with Ms. Washington that it is good to have the money set aside. She noted that does not mean that the full \$25,000 will be spent. A proposal will be put together and brought before Council before any money is spent.

Mayor Foreman noted the same amount of money is budgeted for all of the programs that the Town puts on and felt the \$25,000 was a large sum for a Commission that was just starting.

A poll was taken and the majority of Council wanted to set aside \$25,000 for Parks and Recreation.

### **Debt Service**

Mr. Taber noted the amount could not be changed because that is what the Town owes.

Mr. Brewer asked if the figure would be going up or down next year.

Ms. Ladd would have to look at the amortization schedule; however, it will eventually decrease closer to the end.

Mr. Taber asked Council to consider increases to four positions, which comes to approximately \$13,000, in the budget. He has come up with a strategy to finance the increase. He noted there is, on average, a six-month lapse in filling Police Department positions because of the standards the Town has. If Council approves the increase, he would delay hiring for three months, which would probably occur anyway. He heard Council wanted the following items factored in the budget.

- An additional penny decrease from the tax rate = to approximately \$34,000
- Parks and Recreation budget of \$25,000
- Pay employees cost of health insurance = to \$28,000
- Pay increases = to \$13,000
- Decrease in the marketing budget from administration = to \$2,500

He noted that would leave him looking for the difference of \$97,500. He heard possibly using the meals tax to increase the budget since it does not burden a certain portion of the Town. Another place to increase revenues could be with the cigarette tax. He asked Council for direction.

Ms. Forrester would say the Town Manager has no latitude to increase revenues by the suggested means. She would like to allow the Town Manager to determine where to cut from. She thought the amount was less than the \$97,500 since the \$13,000 was coming from salaries not used.

Ms. Reynolds had suggested a \$.02 decrease this year and a \$.02 decrease next year on the taxes earlier. She asked if that would help with the budget.

Mr. Taber noted that would equal \$68,000.

Ms. Reynolds felt there needed to be a compromise since everyone wants things.

Mr. Brewer asked what the tax increase was that PWC voted on. He was looking for the Town to pay all the insurance premiums and not just for the employees.

Mr. Taber would have to get back to Council on the amount of the increase for PWC. He explained the insurance amount would increase tremendously. He would get back to Council on the amount.

Mr. Brewer stated that a penny on the meals tax would get \$157,000. He asked how much the transient tax rate was.

Ms. Ladd noted it was five and a half cents plus a \$1.00 rack rate. She would have to check State code on the meals and transient tax noting the Town cannot go any higher than what is allowed.

Mr. Wood noted another place to look for increased revenue would be the fees charged for all the recycling and landfill facilities in the Town.

Mr. Brewer asked if a tax like that is adopted whether that has to go through a public hearing.

Mr. Taber agreed it would have to go through the public hearing process.

Mr. Toney still wanted to know the tax rate that PWC has imposed to determine what the median is to give Council an idea of where the Town's rate is compared to theirs. He would like to decrease the rate.

Ms. Forrester noted that is a very valid point. She mentioned the revenue is being based on last year's property values, which may show an increase in revenue.

Mr. Taber explained the current revenue estimate is based on the current assessment of property values. The amount is based on a \$.03 decrease from the current assessed values that PWC provided.

Mr. Brewer asked if there was a company that could do a comprehensive assessment on the property in the Town. He thinks the property would be worth a lot more than what PWC has them assessed. He knows that PWC does not come out and look at each parcel. He believes they look at a geographical information system that was probably generated three or four years ago.

Mayor Foreman mentioned asking for a \$2.00 decrease in the vehicle license tax, a \$.05 decrease in the cigarette tax, and a decrease in the stormwater management fee of \$2.00 per resident.

Mr. Taber noted that increases the gap. He stated if that is the direction Council gives him, he would provide a budget with the decreases.

Mayor Foreman asked if the annual assessments have been done.

Mr. Taber indicated they had and that they do not all fall on the same date.

Mayor Foreman asked if the individuals' getting raises have being given an annual assessment.

Mr. Taber noted there is no raise attached to a salary adjustment, which is allowed by the personnel policy.

Mayor Foreman asked if there was a pay scale for the Town.

Mr. Taber stated he gave it to Council. The scale includes a low, mid and top end salary, Council votes to fund pay increases by merit or for a cost of living adjustment. The assessment tool has a merit rating and the rating would determine what the increase is. He noted there is not a step scale system being used.

Mr. Brewer thought the Council needed to decide on a tax rate.

Ms. Forrester noted suggestions have been made.

Mr. Brewer stated suggestions were already given and the Town Manager came back with a suggested \$.03 decrease.

Mayor Foreman asked Council if they wanted to give any further guidance.

Mr. Brewer wanted to see the additional reductions the Mayor requested.

It was the consensus of Council to move forward with the suggestions made to include the reductions the Mayor mentioned or at least the amount it would decrease the budget.

**IN RE:       ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Foreman moved, seconded by Ms. Reynolds, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by the following voice vote: Mr. Brewer, no; Mr. Foreman, yes; Ms. Forrester, yes; Ms. Reynolds, yes; Mr. Toney, yes; Ms. Washington, yes; Mr. Wood, yes.

Minutes submitted by

Approved by

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Dawn Hobgood  
Town Clerk

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Gerald M. Foreman  
Mayor