

MINUTES
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
BUDGET WORKSHOP
APRIL 5, 2022

Mayor Mills called the Budget Workshop to order at 8:30 a.m. in the Town Hall Conference Room.

Attendance: Mayor F. Darryl Mills, Mayor Pro Tem Hank Miller, Alderman Ken Dull, Alderman Jeff DeGroot, and Alderman Vivian (Zeke) Partin; together with Town Manager Timothy W. Owens and Town Clerk Sylvia J. Holleman. Department Heads: Finance Director Melissa Norton, Information Technology Manager Raquel Ivins, Public Works Director Bill Squires, Police Chief David Squires, Fire Chief Joshua Haraway, Ocean Rescue Director Dave Baker, Planning and Parks Director Tony Wilson, Recreation Program Supervisor Katie Ryan and Parks Maintenance Supervisor Evan Morigerato.

BUDGET REVIEW

Mr. Owens introduced the budget package and then reviewed the General Fund Revenues, including an increase in TDA reimbursements from the Room Occupancy Tax. Alderman Partin asked if TDA money could be used for the Harbor Way Gardens. Mr. Owens said he thought that would be an acceptable use of those funds but it would be up to the Board.

GOVERNING BODY BUDGET

A brief discussion developed regarding the CIP amount set aside for the Historic Preservation Area. Mr. Owens said we were just saving up to pave. When asked about insurance, Mr. Owens said he had built in ten percent in case of an increase.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION BUDGET

Mr. Owens noted that \$15,000 had been placed in the budget for a Pay and Classification Study. Mayor Mills asked how much had been budgeted for a wage increase. Mr. Owens replied, "Five percent plus three percent." Mayor Mills said he did not think eight percent would be enough. Following a brief discussion, there was Board consensus to support a ten percent COLA in lieu of the Pay Study; so the Pay Study should be taken out of the budget. Mr. Owens said the pay increase would help with recruitment if we could implement the increase before July. The Board directed Mr. Owens to place something on the next agenda with details for Board approval.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) BUDGET

IT Manager Raquel Ivins was present to answer questions. A brief discussion developed regarding license plate recognition.

PUBLIC WORKS BUDGET

Public Works Director Bill Squires gave the following review:

- We need to figure out what to do with the office building.
- A brief discussion developed regarding possibly outsourcing Fleet Maintenance.
- Police Pier and Boatlift was added to Building Maintenance budget. A brief discussion followed regarding repairs in the CIP for Wynn plaza.
- Alderman Dull said he was a proponent of re-doing Town Hall. He suggested changing the \$50,000 to \$100,000 in the proposed budget. Ms. Norton noted that we currently have \$200,000 put away for that. Mayor Mills asked that we leave it at \$50,000 for now.

- Following a brief discussion regarding beach accesses, Mr. Squires said if any of the accesses could be taken out, we would do that instead of refurbishing.

POLICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

Police Chief David Squires gave a presentation that included the following:

- Three vehicles were taken out of the budget because we already purchased those.
- Vertical Compression: Sergeants could potentially make more than their supervisors. Would like to make a structural adjustment by adding a new job position for a recruiting officer. We would employ potential new officers while they compete the academy.
- Radio maintenance item will be lowered.

FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

Fire Chief Joshua Haraway gave the following budget review:

- The Volunteer Stipend will go up.
- Uniforms and Vehicle Maintenance will go up.
- Radios/Pagers: Must have six new radios.
- Capital Outlay: Fire Chief's vehicle.
- Fire Protective Gear: Allocating money for five sets to get ahead of the new requirement to replace after seven years instead of ten.
- Increase in Overtime due to Kelly Day.
- A brief discussion developed regarding vehicle maintenance agreements. Chief Haraway said, "We use our Fleet Maintenance but there are a lot of things liability-wise that we have to use someone trained to do that maintenance."
- When asked about a box that the Fire Department and Building Inspections Department in the County came up with for people to use if their radio had no service, Chief Haraway said we have a newer building; we have to have that. Mr. Wilson noted that the County Fire Marshal enforces that.

OCEAN RESCUE BUDGET

Ocean Rescue Director Dave Baker was present to answer questions.

- Mr. Owens said the Board agreed to go to \$15 for the Lifeguards. Mayor Pro Tem Miller referenced the ten percent increase just agreed to by the Board and said Mr. Owens was going to look to see what to do to bring everyone up.
- Lifeguard Director Vehicle: \$15,000 has been taken out of the budget; so it is \$42,000 (\$57,000 minus \$15,000 from CIP).

PUBLIC WORKS – STREETS BUDGET

Mr. Squires said this budget had no changes from the previous budget meeting.

- Alderman Dull asked when we would do the new parking at Shell Island. Mr. Owens replied, "We have a proposal from SEPI to do the design; it will cost \$100,000 to design it. We need direction; we can put it on an agenda to discuss in May. There has been some hesitancy because of some of the neighbors." Mayor Pro Tem Miller expressed the need for us to retain the right to do it.
- Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked staff to go out and look at the trees hanging over sidewalks.

- The Streets and Building Maintenance Departments: all one department now made up of four people since we hired the new cleaning people.
- Mayor Pro Tem Miller referenced the proposed work on Jack Parker Boulevard and said the Board needs a presentation to see if it is something they want to do. Mr. Owens said he could place it on the May agenda to discuss.
- Mayor Pro Tem Miller asked about the street end on West Charlotte Street. Mr. Wilson said we were in the process of applying for a CAMA permit. Mr. Squires said it needs to be stabilized with grass.

PARKING MANAGEMENT BUDGET

Mr. Owens said we could adjust this budget at the end of the year if we need to.

PUBLIC WORKS – ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BUDGET

Mr. Squires said this was Sanitation, Storm Water and Water and Sewer all combined.

- Forced Reduction: Since April 1st when Sanitation was outsourced; we lost three positions.
- Asking to reclassify the three remaining positions using money we had for Daniel Keating (retiring). Mr. Owens said he would bring something to the Board in May because the ten percent wage increase would change the dynamics.
- Mayor Pro Tem Miller expressed the need for a copy of the fee schedule to look at water and sewer rates.

PLANNING AND INSPECTIONS BUDGET

Planning and Inspections Director Tony Wilson said this budget had a little increase from last year. He noted that ten more houses would probably be permitted in the next few weeks.

PARKS AND RECREATION – PROGRAM BUDGET

Recreation Program Supervisor Katie Ryan was present to answer questions.

- \$4,600 more for concerts. A brief discussion developed regarding why WECT can't do more concerts. Could possibly request money from TDA.
- \$44,000 increase in Contracted Services. We have revenue to offset.

PARKS AND RECREATION – PARKS MAINTENANCE BUDGET

Parks Maintenance Supervisor Evan Morigerato was present to answer questions.

- We still have \$5,000 in the budget for Harbor Way Gardens unless the Board wants to add \$5,000 more as requested by Alderman Partin.
- The \$6,500 for Rec Center Maintenance (Contracted Services) can come out now that it is being done by the new company.
- Mayor Mills asked about the landscaping of the area on the west side of the drawbridge. Mr. Morigerato said it is owned by the City of Wilmington but we maintain it. Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, "Mayor Saffo and Mayor Blair agreed that they would repay us. That needs to happen."
- Alderman Dull asked about the poles and rope between Mercer's Pier and the sand dunes. Ocean Rescue Director Dave Baker said, "It was originally done so the sand would not move." Alderman Dull said it was not working. Mr. Owens said we could re-look at that.

WATER BUDGET

Mr. Owens said he had not proposed a rate change.

- Mr. Squires said, “We received a budget for a jet-vac truck last year to clean storm drain lines. They say they have no idea when it will come in (no chip).” Mr. Owens said he thought we should pay a deposit.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- Mr. Owens said storm water has gone to the General Fund.
- Alderman Dull said, “If we ever tie in to CFPUA permanently, we will be at their rates. I think a gradual increase seems appropriate. We do not want to have a shock to the system, so we can increase gradually to help.” Mr. Owens said, “We are still putting money away for this. We are bringing a request for a study by McKim & Creed; it will take a year for the study.
- Alderman Partin said she would like to see the CIP list.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, THE BUDGET WORKSHOP WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:15 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia J. Holleman
Town Clerk