



Town of Waynesville, NC

Town Council Special Called Meeting-Budget Workshop Cont

Municipal Building, 16 South Main Street, Waynesville, NC 28786

Date: May 1st, 2024 Time: 5:00 p.m.

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(828) 452-2491 cpoolton@waynesvillenc.gov

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gary Caldwell called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm with the following members present:

Mayor Gary Caldwell
Mayor Pro Tempore Chuck Dickson
Councilmember Jon Feichter
Councilmember Anthony Sutton
Councilmember Julia Freeman

The following staff members were present:

Rob Hites, Town Manager
Jesse Fowler, Assistant Town Manager
Candace Poolton, Town Clerk
Town Attorney Martha Bradley
Olga Grooman, Assistant Director of Development Services
Elizabeth Teague, Director of Development Services
Taylor Garland, Assistant Finance Director
Police Chief David Adams
Assistant Police Chief, Brandon Gilmore
Jeff Stines, Public Services Director
Page McCurry, Human Resources Director
Luke Kinsland, Recreation Director
Beth Gilmore, DWC Director

Members of the Media:

Becky Johnson, The Mountaineer

B. DISCUSSION BY COUNCILMEMBERS

Councilmember Dickson said he worked on a budget that would reflect what they could do with a 2.5 cent tax increase. He said that would provide a 2.5% COLA, ballistic vests, two firefighters, a vehicle for Development Services, a leaf collector (he mentioned using the stormwater fee to help pay for it), a mower for the cemetery,

meter reading equipment, and a time clock. He said that would total \$479,000. Councilmember Dickson said he will not vote for tax rate increase. Councilmember Freeman said she realizes that in order to take care of staff and to prevent services from diminishing, taxes need to be raised. Councilmember Feichter asked Chief Webb if they could work with having two new firefighter positions now, and two six months later. He said that there are four shifts, so four firefighters are ideal, but they could work with two for now by increasing part-time personnel. Councilmember Feichter pointed out that \$441,915 of the increase in spending is dedicated to public safety. He added that the starting salary of the Town's police officers is inadequate, and the proposed tax rate increase does nothing to address that. Councilmember Sutton agreed with Councilmember Feichter. Councilmember Freeman also agreed to a 2.5 cent tax rate increase. Mr. Hites reminded Council that they can only vote on the tax rate once. He said he would have to look into the possibility of approving the budget and setting the tax rate is possible to do in two separate motions.

Councilmembers Feichter, Freeman, and Sutton suggested raising the projected sales tax revenue from 3% to 3.5%. Mr. Fowler said the stormwater fee will cover 26% of the stormwater program expenditures. He presented a "worksheet" to Council, so they can adjust values and figure out exactly how much each tier should be charged, so they can come back to the next budget workshop with an idea of what the fee structure should look like. Mr. Hites said the stormwater fee would have to go on the tax bill so they can collect the fee.

Mr. Fowler said that a year and a half from now, switch infrastructure will have to be replaced, but that process can be broken up. He said it will most likely cost \$150,000.

Councilmember Feichter said there was an estimated \$103,000 for police vehicles on one of the proposed budgets. Chief Adams if he would forgo the vehicles so they could provide an increase in base police salary. Mr. Hites clarified that all other officers would have to get a pay increase as well; for example, if base salary went up 5%, officers that have already been promoted would also receive that same raise.

C. SCHEDULE OF FURTHER BUDGET SESSIONS/BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

A motion was made by Councilmember Dickson, seconded by Councilmember Sutton, to continue this meeting until May 14th at 4pm in the Municipal Conference room located at 16 S. Main Street, Waynesville. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

Gary Caldwell, Mayor

Robert W. Hites, Jr. Town Manager

Candace Poolton, Town Clerk