

**MINUTES**  
**BOARD OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS**  
**Work/Budget Session**  
APRIL 4, 2019, 4:30 P.M.

**PRESENT:**

Commissioner Susan U. Burdette, Chair  
Commissioner Philip L. Einhorn  
Commissioner Patrick T. Richards  
L. Jesse Bane, Town Administrator  
Michael Krantz, Director of Human Resources and Administration  
Lisa Moody, Director of Finance  
Joshua Forth, Technology Manager

**OTHERS:**

Kathi Santora, Recording Secretary

**NOT PRESENT:**

Commissioner Amy Chmielewski  
Commissioner Brendan Hopkins

**I. Call to order**

Mr. Bane called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

**II. Approval of Agenda:**

The meeting agenda was approved.

**III. Budget presentation**

- **Budget Introduction:** Mr. Bane turned the meeting over to Ms. Moody, who introduced the FY20 budget. Each commissioner and meeting attendee received a printed version of the budget in a binder.

She noted that the binder format is largely unchanged from previous years. Ms. Moody explained the framework, work session schedule and work session topics and added she will explain any changes made from previous budget cycles as they arise.

Ms. Moody informed the group that, at this time, only the Historical Society of Harford County and the Bel Air Volunteer Fire Department are expected to attend during upcoming budget meetings.

Page 12 shows an assessable base chart, which reflects what each penny of assessment yields in revenue, e.g., .01 = \$150K. This year it is estimated to be \$152,500.

Page 13 reflects the property tax revenue growth over the years. For FY20, the estimate is about 1.3%; this reflects real and personal taxes.

Page 14 shows Capital Improvement Program (CIP) details.

Page 15 shows the General Fund Revenue Chart. It shows that property taxes are still the major source of revenue at 59.3%; State share taxes are 15.4%.

Page 16 shows an overview of expenditures. Major expenses include: Public safety (39%); Department of Public Works (28%) and general government. Personnel costs are included in the latter and Ms. Moody noted a 4% decrease this year due to staff changes.

Ms. Moody also noted that the budget shows some shifts in certain areas that are related to the new accounting methodology adopted this year.

She directed attention to the finance tab of the binder. Some sections and account numbers are different due to the accounting system adopted this year. The new system also gave staff a chance to consolidate and/or expand across departments some items for increased efficiency and transparency. The pages in this section also reflect three fiscal years, added for reference.

Ms. Moody invited questions as needed that may clarify issues related to these changes.

- **Review of estimated general fund revenues:** The real property tax figure estimate represents the largest source of projected revenue. FY20 is the last year of the three-year reassessment cycle. There is little fluctuation in this year's tax revenue compared to previous budgets.

Mr. Einhorn requested that Ms. Moody provide the amounts of revenue generated by used town-owned vehicle sales from last year. Ms. Moody stated that she will provide this number to him at the next budget meeting.

Other major revenue sources include state highway user fees, police protection grants, licenses and permits, grants (e.g. bulletproof vests, bike/pedestrian plan, wayfinding signage) and the Harford County tax rebate.

Additional expected revenue sources include Armory use fees, red light cameras revenue, interest on investments (rates have been stable, but can be

unpredictable), rental income from Armory Marketplace and vehicle/equipment resales. This year, expected vehicles that will be financed include a streetsweeper, three police vehicles and a motorcycle.

Based on results from a recent personnel study, the Town is proposing that a transfer from “unassigned” fund of \$150,000 be used to cover resulting one-time costs in salaries and benefits. This does not represent operating costs coming from an unassigned fund. This is not going to be a recurring expense. Unused personnel monies (from retirements and staff turnover) have been going to this unassigned fund, in anticipation of this one-time cost that is a result of the personnel study.

The last significant revenue sources to be highlighted are sewer and parking funds.

In summary, the estimated total revenue for FY20 is \$13.8 million.

- **Review of Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

Major CIP items for FY20 include a large screen and stage lighting for the armory; IT capital projects; art amenities and public art; the Rockfield Park Chesapeake Sensory Plaza to be located next to the creative playground; tree removal at Shamrock Park; bike/pedestrian improvements and roadway markers; construction of a paved path from Lester Way to Alice Ann Park; Phase 4 of the current wayfinding project for portions of costs for new or replacement signage in downtown, including parking lots; Plumtree Park playground equipment; debt service for the energy contract.

The Police department is requesting three new vehicles and a motorcycle. Chief Moore is recommending that the Department keep the old motorcycle for training and back-up. Mr. Richards inquired about the benefit of a motorcycle for a small-town department. Mr. Bane and Ms. Burdette spoke to the need for this in instances of events (such as large funerals) that generate heavy traffic and for first responder needs in crowded areas.

Department of Public Works (DPW) is requesting a budget item for a new streetsweeper, exterior building painting on the DPW building; ongoing storm water management projects; curb and gutter replacements at Rockfield Manor;

Other items include replacement of floor and subfloor in Armory foyer; Plumtree Run stream restoration, Phase three/Section four; planters and bollards in Armory Marketplace.

Funds for Office Street/Courthouse Square improvements are budgeted at

\$385,000. A Community Legacy grant of \$200,000 will be used, as well as Community Development block grant funds. Mr. Richards clarified that the end cost to the Town would be \$150,000. Ms. Moody stated that this money was allocated years ago. Mr. Richards wanted to clarify how much, if the project wasn't done, would represent savings to the Town. Ms. Moody noted that the \$150,000 was already allocated in previous budgets, so it may not be possible to move that money elsewhere.

Mr. Richards stated he was still concerned about this project in light of the needs for the police department and associated construction projects. He suggested placing this item on the Commissioner discussion list and for Mr. Small's presentation.

Additional categories discussed are debt service on the parking garage, parking enforcement jeep and lighting upgrades funded by the parking fund.

DPW has asked for funds to replace the parking garage sweeper. The County would participate in the cost. The Town is considering financing this purchase. The parking garage is struggling financially. Lease fees are low and there is no growth in usage.

Mr. Richards asked if the County requires advance notice for purchase assistance and Ms. Moody confirmed this. He also asked about advance notice needed to sell the garage. Ms. Moody stated that this is addressed in the Town/County agreement and would need to be addressed.

The sewer fund items include pumping station equipment replacement and engineering work at Gateway and Kelly Avenue pump stations. Also, replacing sewage pumps at Baltimore Pike and English Country Manor, repairs to the wet well at the Baltimore Pike location and valve replacement at the Ewing Station.

There are four budget items that address debt service for sewer maintenance and repair projects.

- **Review of General Fund Expenditures**

**a. Technology:** Joshua Forth, Technology Manager, arrived at 5:35 p.m. to present his report.

Mr. Krantz stated that the Town is very fortunate to have Mr. Forth on staff. He is autonomous, motivated and pro-active and keeps the entire organization functioning efficiently.

Mr. Forth reported on newer and critical projects for the coming fiscal year:

- Annual fee for Microsoft Exchange, renewed through Dell, who offered the best price. He noted that the Town has not lost email connectivity at all since this hosted service contract began. Mr. Krantz noted that staff can now remotely access email from any device.
- Annual cost for licensing for Eclipse service that performs scanning and archiving of documents.
- Annual licensing for ArcGIS, which supports DPW field mapping of sewers, road surfaces, trees and more. Mr. Krantz noted that this technology has the potential to be interactive and to inform residents of ongoing projects and their status.
- Annual maintenance and support fees for the Edmunds financial management software. Mr. Forth noted that the server is hosted by Edmunds. Ms. Moody noted that Mr. Forth was satisfied that this is a secure arrangement.

In response to a question from Mr. Richards about in-house servers, Mr. Forth stated that the town still maintains the Eclipse service on an inhouse server, as well as two domain controllers for staff printers and computers. The old finance server is still running since it contains information that is still needed in the transition to Edmunds. There is also an anti-virus server that is still operational and a file server for shared network drives. Finally, there is an update server.

All servers are backed up every night. Some servers' functions will eventually be replaced by cloud services, depending on costs and efficiencies.

- Heating, ventilation and A/C units for IT offices
- Two Panasonic tablets for motor bike units
- A virtual host server that will consolidate certain server support. This increases efficiency in the event of emergencies and updates.
- Multi-carrier cell phone repeater for Town Hall to increase connectivity in the building
- Mr. Forth opted to purchase licenses rather than the subscription services for Microsoft Office 2019. The licenses come with support until the version is completely outdated. Owning the license provides consistency for staff users.

Mr. Richards asked if there are group purchase arrangements for IT services. Mr.

Krantz confirmed that the town piggybacks on many government contracts to get the best price. He also added that Mr. Forth researches pricing to ensure the town is getting the best prices for equipment and support services. Ms. Moody stated Mr. Forth goes above and beyond the current procurement policies, even when it is not required. Mr. Forth noted that Dell provided very competitive pricing.

Mr. Richards asked if enhanced conference call services could be investigated. Mr. Forth stated that this is already in the FY20 budget and has been researched. The new equipment will allow all participants to be clearly heard on calls.

Mr. Forth left the meeting when his presentation was complete at 6:05.

#### **b. Administrator, Legal and Commissioners**

**Administrator:** Ms. Moody stated that there are few changes this year, except for a few line item changes, made for efficiency. These include volunteer dinner and quarterly newsletter expenses.

**Legal:** There is an increase for legal and advertisement fees that will be required for charter amendments.

**Commissioners:** Details include travel and conference fees. These items have been reduced based on past history. Other items include the commissioners' retreat, advertising, display fees, clothing, volunteer recognition, Bel Air Bond newsletter, community and holiday events.

Ms. Burdette suggested that the Town look at advertising in Southern Living Magazine. Havre de Grace recently did this.

#### **c. Elections**

Mr. Krantz suggested an increase in pay for election board judges. Four judges at elections is the ideal number.

#### **d. Finance Department**

Ms. Moody stated that there is now an employee recognition item in each department budget.

- A Finance Department employee is expected to leave soon, and that position will be re-structured.

There is an increased line item for printing and mailing that is related to new

processes for real estate and sewer billing. Office Depot will be the vendor. The procurement officer is trying to negotiate the set-up fee.

**Discussion by Commissioners on Budget Issues**

Ms. Moody summarized her action items 1) provide the revenue from FY18 and FY19 for reselling used vehicles and equipment 2) The Office Street Courthouse Square project will be discussed during Mr. Small's presentation 3) Inquire if MML uses a group procurement process.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Signature on file

---

Susan U. Burdette, Chair  
Board of Town Commissioners

Signature on file

---

Michael L. Krantz, Town Clerk