

BOARD OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS

WORK/BUDGET SESSION

April 30, 2019 - 4:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioner Susan U. Burdette, Chair
Commissioner Amy G. Chmielewski
Commissioner Philip L. Einhorn
Commissioner Brendan P. Hopkins
Commissioner Patrick T. Richards
L. Jesse Bane, Town Administrator
Charles Dawson, Deputy Director - Department of Public Works
Trish Heidenreich, Director of Economic Development
Michael L. Krantz, Director of Administration
Lisa M. Moody, Director of Finance
Sgt. Robert Pfarr, Police Department
Kevin L. Small, Director of Planning

ABSENT: Steve Kline, Director of Public Works
Charles Moore, Chief of Police

OTHERS: Joan Suitt, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Aegis Representative

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Hopkins requested discussion on an appointment for the Historic Preservation Commission during Closed Session and a vote today in order to have a quorum for their next meeting.

Commissioner Einhorn moved and Commissioner Hopkins seconded the motion to approve the agenda adding the discussion and vote on an appointment for the Historic Preservation Commission. The motion carried.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

The Town Administrator informed Katherine Butterfield has been recognized by Harford County Commission for Women and is the Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year. Katherine is a volunteer leader at the Boys and Girls Club and exceptional young lady. The Town Administrator would like to announce at the Town Board meeting that the request of \$10,000 by the Boys and Girls Club from the FY20 budget be made in Katherine's honor. The Commissioners approved the request.

AGENDA FOR TOWN MEETING (Monday, May 6, 2019)

Presentations:

Premier Partner Safety Award - Chesapeake Employers' Insurance Company

The Chesapeake Employers' Insurance Company will present the Safety Award to the Town. The Director of Administration thanked the Police Department and Department of Public Works for diligently reinforcing and continuing to train staff in safety.

Student Achievement Award - Olivia Straub, St. Margaret School

Olivia Straub from St. Margaret School will receive a Student Achievement Award.

Certificate of Recognition - Katherine Butterfield - Boys and Girls Club

Katherine Butterfield will be recognized.

New Business:

As a quorum will not be in place during the Town Board meeting on May 6, 2019, the following New Business was reviewed during the Work Session but will not appear on the Agenda for the meeting.

Wayfinding Phase III Directional Signage Contract

The Director of Planning advised the Wayfinding Phase III lowest bid came in over budget but was renegotiated where it would satisfy the budgeted amount.

Chesapeake Sensory Plaza Playground Equipment Contract

The Director of Planning reviewed the grant received from Maryland American Water Company and identified an equipment supplier for the children to actively play with water. The Director of Planning advised a local contractor will be used.

Commissioner Hopkins noted everything is supplied but the water and inquired if Rockfield Foundation could be used to start a "crowd campaign" for water and upgrading the playground equipment.

The Director of Planning stated the creative playground does need upgrading. Other Foundations are being looked at.

Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year 2020 - 2024

The Director of Planning informed the Strategic Plan was sent to the Commissioners and advised once approved by the Commissioners it will be sent for printing.

Street Resurfacing Contract

The Deputy Director of Public Works advised this is for approval of the street resurfacing contract for the following roads:

- Hemmingway Drive
- Benjamin Road and Benjamin Court
- Catherine Street and Catherine Court
- Eastern Alley and Eastern Avenue

STAFFING UPDATE:

The Director of Administration informed:

- Senior Planner - began employment.
- Dispatcher full time - began employment.
- Armory Event Manager - has been hired.
- Laborer - vacant and position to be posted.
- Parking Enforcement - being hired.
- Crossing Guard - position to be posed.

CALENDAR:

The Director of Administration advised an updated calendar will be available tomorrow.

The Director of Finance informed of the Wellness Fair, Thursday, May 9th in the Armory from 8:30 - 11:30 A.M. and 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. The Fair will be partnered with Upper Chesapeake Medical Center and everyone was encouraged to attend.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Police Station Proposed Expansion Update

The Director of Planning talked with Crabtree/Rohrbaugh who are within 24 hours of finishing their work. Option 4 has been added which is a reduction to Option 1 and included in the report. The report will be sent to the Commissioners.

The Town Administrator stated Option 4 will show a significant decrease in the amount of square footage.

Discussion continued regarding the community meeting and fitness rooms.

Board of Commissioners Summer Meeting Schedule

The Director of Administration advised in the past the Commissioners decided on a summer meeting schedule for the 3rd Monday in July and August. The Commissioners approved the Town Board meetings for July 15, 2019 and August 19, 2019.

Commissioners Report

The Director of Finance distributed and reviewed the Commissioners report.

LIAISON REPORTS:

Commissioner Einhorn inquired if the picture was received for the Cultural Arts mural at the Tower Restaurant. The picture has not been received and contact will be made.

Commissioner Einhorn inquired about the recorded message at the Administration office. The Director of Administration explained the message is automatically heard when staff are away from the area.

Commissioner Hopkins notified the system allows dial by name.

CLOSED SESSION:

A 5:15 p.m. Commissioner Hopkins moved and Commissioner Einhorn seconded the motion to go into Closed Session to discuss appointments to Historic Preservation Commission, Tree Committee and Board of Ethics. The motion carried.

The Work Session reopened at 5:25 p.m.

Appointment to Historic Preservation Commission

Commissioner Hopkins moved and Commissioner Richards seconded the motion to approve the appointment of Megan Greco as a member of the Historic Preservation Commission for a term of three years, effective immediately.

Ayes: Commissioners Chmielewski, Einhorn, Hopkins, Richards and Burdette

Nays: None

The motion carried.

BUDGET:

Discussion:

Commissioner Hopkins advised the list being distributed has items the Commissioners wanted and staff feels necessary for the FY20 budget. This will include a 2¢ tax increase that amounts to \$305,000. Commissioner Hopkins advised discussion can continue at a future Work Session about wanting the increase and if items listed are needed.

Commissioner Hopkins would like to knockout some of the debt service focusing on police vehicles and public works skid loader, backhoe, and dump truck. These are short term debt scheduled to be paid off in FY21 and FY22. Commissioner Hopkins reviewed the possibilities.

Commissioner Richards inquired about vehicle debt. The Director of Finance informed the Town cannot fund vehicles/equipment with cash and will be looking into leasing some vehicles.

Commissioner Hopkins stated \$35,000 would have to be cut and recommended using the handicap ramps planned on the street project.

The Director of Finance further discussed reoccurring expenses.

Commissioner Hopkins informed the position of Public Relations Specialist will handle all social media, website, public relations, press release and be the spoke person for the Town. Chair Burdette advised this is needed and that other municipalities have one. The Director of Economic Development notified the efforts of each department are fragmented and need a consolidated effort to get the community onboard.

Commissioner Einhorn reminded during the public meeting the Town said the Police Department will not increase taxes this year. Commissioner Hopkins noted that is true but was never stated there would not be a tax increase this year. Chair Burdette advised most people believe there will be a tax increase.

Commissioner Hopkins informed the average assessment of \$200,000 would require payment of \$39.17 next year and assessments of \$300,000 would require payment of \$60.00 more next year.

Commissioner Richards stated there is logic in a step increase and would like a plan in place after the final plan for the Police Department. Commissioner Richards feels a consolidated decision can be made when all information has been given.

Commissioner Hopkins noted his proposal is separate from the Police Department.

Commissioner Chmielewski stated the Public Relations position could be outsourced under a contract.

Chair Burdette feels strongly the Public Relations position is needed and will help the shopping centers/businesses with public connections.

Commissioner Einhorn has no problem with the Public Relations position but has concern with raising taxes because people heard at the public meeting no increase this year and it may be confusing. Commissioner Einhorn wants to do everything we can to not have a tax increase.

Planning Department

The Director of Planning reviewed the following:

Salaries - change of job descriptions. Senior Planner will have building permit duties and GIS. Planner II will focus on code enforcement duties taking property maintenance away from Department of Public Works.

Overtime - No change.

Travel/Training/Memberships - No change.

Boards and Commissions - Hearing/Training - No change.

Postage - No change.

Rockfield Gardens - \$1,500 to help kids with plantings.

Farmers Market - No change.

Recording Secretaries - No change.

Planning - Traffic Review/Studies - No change.

Architectural Review - No change.

Bike/Ped Plan Implementation - install "sharrows" or Share the Road signs and pavement markings. These will be installed at the orange/yellow area of the map distributed and designed to make people aware of a bike route. This will also connect to Harford County routes.

Telephone - No change.

Supplies - No change.

Tree Committee - Supplies, Training and Promotions - More work is needed on the Memorial Gardens as Ashe Trees need to be taken down before becoming a problem.

Strategic Plan Implementation - to encourage conservation of water and incentives for residents to help upgrade fixtures - \$5,000. Site amenities for area around Ma & Pa Trail to accommodate users and attract visitors to downtown - \$5,000. Assistance from a consultant to advise the Town regarding online GIS and allow new hired Senior Planner to expand the system with other departments and organizations - \$10,000.

Historic Preservation - Promotional Activities - No change.

Wayfinding Signage - partnership with the Alliance - receiving \$5,000 from the Alliance, \$10,000 from the Town and \$15,000 through a grant. Additional signs are scheduled to be installed - \$30,000. The Welcome Sign on Sun Trust building may be replaced.

Trail Enhancements - connection from Lester Way to Alice Anne Park. An easement was acquired several years ago and tree pruning and shrub work is planned to open up the park and make it more inviting - \$30,000.

Commissioner Richards inquired about the trail connection. The Director of Planning advised Phase I from the trailhead to crossing Main Street should be complete in two/three weeks. The next section is being bid out and will take a longer time because of wetland/stormwater impacts behind the Detention Center.

Human Resources Department

The Director of Administration reviewed the following:

Salaries - for three employees.

Contracts - postage machine lease cost reduced. General Code license fee, changes to Ethics and Election laws and MML's web-based compensation survey. Innovative Insurance ACA Employer Reporting Plan, a comprehensive program mandated by the Affordable Care Act.

Physicals Testing - No change.

Salary Study and Benefits

The Director of Administration reviewed the salary study made on Police and Civilian employees with salary survey results, comparisons of the market and ratios.

The Director of Administration advised the current pay schedule is broken and recommends implementing a new one. The Director of Administration proposed going to a logical progression in the steps/grades advising it will cost more to transition.

The Director of Administration displayed the new pay scales and explained the percent changes and the cost analysis made.

Commissioner Richards asked for the net impact. The Director of Administration informed moving to the new scale for payroll is \$96,000.

The Director of Finance advised the Town will save money with the new scale and the total of \$150,000 includes benefits. The Director of Finance is proposing to fund this for one time through the Unassigned Fund balance. The Director of Finance informed the many vacancies brought salary/benefit savings. These savings can flow into the Unassigned Fund at the end of FY19 and fund the new revised scale. The revised scale will allow for a COLA.

Commissioner Richard stated this needs to be fixed and acknowledged the great analysis.

Miscellaneous

The Director of Finance reviewed the following:

Contingency - this is where the \$150,000 is housed, includes funding for a merit increase, salaries/benefits, and 1% COLA.

The Director of Finance asked the Commissioners to consider when meeting at the next Budget Session to give an unofficial vote with regard to all the salaries.

Commissioner Richard moved and Commissioner Hopkins seconded the motion to approve the proposed salaries. The motion carried.

General Insurance - houses LGIT. Received a proposed rate increase of 2.1%.

Employee Recognition - previously included departmental employee recognition and now is spread out to each department.

Wellness Program - Not able to fund a new STEP program in FY19. Now requesting to start program up again with another company.

Transfer to Public Art - used to supplement Public Amenity revolving account in Special Revenue Fund for the future projects of murals, sculptures and support of the Arts and Entertainment District.

Transfer to Capital Revenue - per policy, the account sets aside funds each year to finance capital projects.

Benefits

The Director of Finance notified the Benefits Department has changed and are accounted for in the different departments. Some items are still included in Benefits.

Not seen under Benefits but included in the departments: Social Security, Disability Insurance and Life are contracted through LGIT, Pension, two defined benefit plans and Deferred Comp match.

Seen under Benefits and in the departments: With new hires medical insurance is unknown and will stay in the Benefits department.

Medical - no rate increase in the health plan.

Dental - 8% rate increase

Vision - 10% rate increase

Worker's Comp - this fiscal year .57 discount - increased to .64 discount

OPED - healthcare for retirees. Part of the MACO OPED.

Transfer to Leave Payout Reserve - works similar to the Capital Reserve. Based on the policy the account sets aside funds each budget year to fund leave payouts.

Commissioner Hopkins asked if retirees receive a COLA. The Director of Finance advised that has been talked about but hard to fund.

Debt Service

Equipment/Vehicles - \$246,056 budget for FY20.

JCI Energy Project - \$82,649 budget until 2032. The energy savings are paying for the debt.

Liquor Board Retirement - State law to pay into the retirement for Harford County Liquor Board employees. Last payment in FY21.

Discussion by Commissioners on Budget Issues:

The Director of Finance reviewed topics discussed at the last Work Session Meeting, including the Annual Christmas Parade, and Town contributions to the Boy & Girls Club and LASOS.

Added tonight:

- Commissioner Hopkins budget discussion.
- The Town Administrator reminded about the request for a staff person for the Elderly/Needy Commission. The Town Administrator spoke with the Commission on Aging who informed there are people in Town asking for funds for doctor's visits or transportation and are being turned down. The Town Administrator recommends \$10,000 be put into the budget for when the Commission of Aging informs of a Town resident in need. The Town Administrator stated the Town will control the money.

Commissioner Hopkins asked if grants are available.

The Director of Finance informed the Constant Yield will be published in the paper on Wednesday, May 8th. The ad is being finalized and will be e-mailed to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Hopkins asked if a potential tax increase has to be a part of the ad. The Director of Finance explained the exact language from the State has to be on the ad and she will have to investigate the question.

The Director of Finance reminded Thursday, May 23rd, during the Town Board meeting, the Public Hearing on the budget will be held.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Approved: May 23, 2019

Signature on file

Susan U. Burdette, Chair
Board of Town Commissioners

Signature on file

Michael L. Krantz, Town Clerk