

WORKSHOP TOWN BOARD

April 16, 2024

Present Mayor George Holleman
Mayor Pro Tem Eric Bumgarner
Councilman Jack Simms
Councilwoman Kim Brown
Councilwoman Tamara Odom

The workshop was opened for discussion by Mayor Holleman at 9:00 a.m. Mayor Holleman mentioned that Donna Hedrick, representative of the daughters of the American Revolution, asked to sell wreaths this coming December to be placed on veterans' graves in the Taylorsville cemetery. They will coordinate the sales, placement and then removal of all wreaths on the graves in the cemetery. By unanimous vote, the town council agreed to the sale and placement of wreaths on veterans' graves in the Taylorsville cemetery.

Items of Discussion:

1. FY 24-25 Draft Budget:

Manager Aaron Wike states that this is a very preliminary draft of a budget for FY 24-25. Utility costs are increasing by 28%. Trash and recycling costs have not come in yet but increases are expected. The LEGRS retirement contribution is increasing for both police & general fund employees. The medical insurance for all full-time employees is increasing by 5%. We have priced other carriers for comparison of costs vs coverage. The MAPS group will have the completed updates to the personnel policy and pay rate study ready for presentation at the May meeting hopefully. The police dept. will show being underpaid for starting salaries and it is projected to recommend increasing starting salary for police officers to be raised up to \$41,500.00. The financing of 1 new police vehicle is proposed. The \$10,000 expense for striping and upfitting is listed under vehicle equipment. The 2 contracted SROs are now listed under contracted services and not included in the salary expense line item as in previous years. The yearly amount for the SRO contract between the town and Alexander County Sheriff's department is also expensed under contracted services – Alex. Co. SRO's. The drug task force is a separate checking account where distributions from narcotics investigations are deposited from the US Treasury and monitored by the Treasury office and town finance department. There will be a slight reduction in the amount of property tax billed this coming year compared to last year due to Gateway Recycling and their property being tax exempt. The motor vehicle and sales tax revenues are projected to continue to see increases. There are drainage issues from stormwater around the building and parking lot of the urgent care building. Also stormwater issues around 1st Ave. SW in front of B. Watts home and Apple Valley Dentistry. Curbing and sidewalk repairs are also needed. The removal of the medians on Main Ave. Dr. and 1st Street SW were also discussed. The environmental fee will be increasing by \$3.00 each month to a total of \$14.00 per month. It still costs \$19.00 per month for the town to cover all the costs of garbage, recycling and tipping fee expenses. Councilwoman Brown asked about the possibility of starting to do our own garbage collection. Manager Wike stated that it would cost approx. 3 million to get into the garbage collection business at this stage. The Town stopped doing their own

collection in 1989 and started contracting with garbage disposal service of Conover for the service. The hospital parking permits came up for discussion. The rule of not allowing the sale of firearms and ammunition were discussed. According to Attorney Pannell, a state statute allows for the sale of firearms and ammunition by vendors. The W&S rates for each service will increase by \$1.50 each month. A portion of the capital charge will be lowered to help offset the increase.

2. Downtown Revitalization – Mainstreet Conference

Three members of the town council attended the Main Street Conference in Goldsboro. Councilman Bumgarner states he was surprised by the number of people and towns in attendance especially for our local area. Since the Mainstreet program began, they have helped with the award of over 5.2 billion in grant funding for various downtown revitalization projects. There are numerous grants to be obtained for making downtown revitalization happen for Taylorsville. Councilman Bumgarner brought up Gama Sonic Solar Lighting. The representative for them says we can get several to try and our only obligation will be the shipping costs back if they do not serve our needs. It was mutually agreed to get several to try and see how they will work. A 3 light head and pole will cost \$1300.00 but would pay for itself in 2 years time. Councilwoman Brown states that the walking tour for downtown needs to happen so we can get a clear picture of what areas need to be addressed first. The Advisory Committee for downtown revitalization will consist of the following:

Property owner – Tyler Johnson

Local resident – Barbara Cothran

Business owner – Kim Brown

Town Council member – Tamara Odom

County Commissioner member – Kent Herman

County Manager/representative – Ben Faulkenbery

Town Manager – Aaron Wike

The first meeting of the advisory committee is set for Tuesday April 30th at 1:00 pm in the council chambers of Town Hall. After which the committee will set the next meetings and select a chair person. Town Council representative will report back to the Town Board on the committee's recommendations. The main objectives of the committee for now are address parking in the downtown area, signage for storefronts, storefront appearance guidelines, and to set the walking tour audit date. Also to get trial samples of the solar lights to try in downtown and at Matheson Park.

3. SECU Foundation Grant Program Information

The state employees credit union has grant opportunities available and are directed towards non-profits and governmental organizations that demonstrate the Credit Union philosophy of people helping people. It was suggested that Alexander County and the Town partner to create a museum in downtown in the old jail building. More information will be obtained and reported back at a later date.

4. Main Avenue Drive Medians

Recently a resident suggested the possibility of the removal of the median in front of Adams Funeral Home to allow for additional parking in the area. The removal of the medians on Main Ave. Dr. and 1st Street SW were discussed. Prices will be obtained on the removal of the medians on Main Ave. Dr. and diagonal parking placed back. Preliminary prices for repaving alone are \$33,000. This will help with parking on Main Avenue and court parking and help with the needed spaces for the Apple Festival. It was also discussed about removing the median down from Emergency Services building. Bids will be gotten to remove the trees and for the median removal and re-paving. There are drainage issues from stormwater around the building and parking lot of the urgent care building. There are also stormwater issues around 1st Ave. SW in front of B. Watts home and Apple Valley Dentistry. Curbing and sidewalk repairs are also needed.

5. Interim Town Manager

A motion was made by Councilwoman Odom and seconded by Councilwoman Brown to not hire an interim town manager. Aaron Wike will remain in the Town Manager position until a new town manager can be hired and then he will resume his role as public utility manager. The motion was passed unanimously.

6. WPCOG Town Manager Search Program

Anthony Starr, Executive Director of WPCOG and David Pugh, HR Director of WPCOG presented information on searching for a new town manager for the town. The WPCOG will perform the search and supply the town board with all the candidates for their review. They will narrow the candidate pool down to approx. 8 to 10 of the best qualified according to the town's specifications on qualifications they list and do all investigative, background and drug screenings. This agreement between the WPCOG and the town will cost \$3,500.00.

A motion by Councilman Simms and seconded by Commissioner Bumgarner to go into closed session as permitted by N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(6) to discuss the personnel matter of the search for a new town manager was made. The motion was passed unanimously.

Those in closed session were: Mayor Holleman, Councilwoman Brown, Councilwoman Odom, Councilman Simms, Councilman Bumgarner, Attorney Monroe Pannel, Anthony Starr, WPCOG Exec. Director and David Pugh, WPCOG HR Director.

Description of closed minutes as follows:

The Taylorsville Town Council discussed the desired attributes of the next Town Manager with WPCOG staff. A motion was made by Councilwoman Brown and seconded by Councilwoman Tamara Odom to exit closed session at 11:58 am and return to the regular workshop meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Simms and seconded by Councilman Bumgarner to approve the agreement between the WPCOG and the Town to begin the search for the next town manager for the town. The motion was approved unanimously. See attachment A, which is hereby incorporated and made a part of these minutes herein.

A brief recess was taken for lunch and then the meeting resumed.

Town Council members are to get information from the people that they know who

develop and maintain websites to get in touch with Town Hall so that we can get quotes started for updates to the town's website.

With no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Simms and seconded by Councilwoman Brown to adjourn the workshop at 1:45 pm. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mayor

Councilman

Councilman

Councilman

Councilman

Attest: _____
Yolanda T. Prince, Town Clerk