

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE/BUDGET WORKSESSION OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WARRENTON HELD ON MAY 15, 2017

A Finance Committee/Budget worksession of the Council of the Town of Warrenton was held on May 15, 2017 in the Council Chambers.

Councilmembers present: Mayor Powell Duggan, presiding, Vice Mayor Sunny Reynolds, Councilmembers Sean M. Polster, Brett A. Hamby, Alec P. Burnett, Robert H. Kravetz and Kevin T. Carter. Mr. Wood participated via telephone.

Also present: Brannon Godfrey, Town Manager, Whitson W. Robinson, Town and Evelyn J. Weimer, Town Recorder.

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

April Financial Statement

Ms. Stephanie Miller, Finance and Human Services Director, highlighted the April Financial Statement.

Mr. Carter asked about the bank franchise tax and Ms. Miller noted that the tax is based on the total deposits from banks within the Town. Some are located outside the Town. Mr. Carter asked if the budget appropriation for each fund could be calculated on a monthly basis. Ms. Miller noted she would begin to do that.

On a motion by Mr. Kravetz, seconded by Mr. Burnett, the Committee voted unanimously to forward the April financials to Council for approval at their next meeting.

FY 18 Budget Discussion

The Manager reported that each Councilmember had been given a draft budget document but there were still a few things to be added in the department sections for IT and Motor Pool. The other departmental sections have been revised to include organizational charts and goals and objectives. He stated that Inspections Division had been moved from the Public Safety function to Community Development where it is supervised. It had been included in Public Safety because the State Auditor of Public Accounts reports the function with public safety. He called attention to the dollar chart revisions. He also noted that the only changes to date are in community development the budget for the Comp. Plan had been reduced from \$170,000 to \$80,000. Another change was an increase of \$333,333 included in the General Fund Capital Projects for one third of the library funding. He noted that there are two requests that Council is considering. He stated that the grant of \$5,000 usually received from the Virginia Commission for the Arts for a local government Challenge Grant for the Bluemont Concert Series had been reduced by \$500 to \$4,500. The Town usually contributes \$5,000 to match the Challenge Grant, for a total contribution of \$10,000. Bluemont had requested the Town contribute the \$500 lost from the grant reduction. The Manager's recommendation was to fund the additional \$500. He stated that the Boys and Girls Club had requested an increase in their contribution of \$20,000 for a total of \$30,000.

The Manager noted that he needed Council direction on staffing, both additional and upgraded ones, and capital projects, whether there are changes to General Fund and revenue changes.

Mayor Duggan asked where the \$20,000 would come from if Council decided to raise the amount contributed to the Boys and Girls Club. The Manager responded that an increase may be necessary in another General Fund revenue item. It may be necessary to cut an expenditure somewhere or take it out of fund balance. Mr. Kravetz asked if the extra funds are contributed, could they be used as they want or if they could be earmarked for use for financial aid or programs, as had been done with the community college. Mr. Polster noted that he could not support giving to a nonprofit. He stated that \$30,000 could be spent to put lights on Franklin Street. He felt it was a great program but what is the priority. Ms. Reynolds asked Mr. Polster if he thought the Boys and Girls Club helped the children and Mr. Polster responded that they currently have \$515,000 in pledges and \$90,000 from the recent contribution from the Path Foundation which is more than they had last year. He stated that the same restrictions should be put on them as on the Partnership last year, keep the contribution at \$10,000 and if they are successful Council would consider increasing it. Mr. Polster noted that the Town spends \$210,000 in contributions to nonprofits and agencies and tells the taxpayers where to put their donations. Mr. Kravetz asked Mr. Polster to not take it personally but the Town has no problem spending \$40,000 of taxpayer money on a one-day event. He stated that this would have positive results 365 days per year. Mr. Polster responded that \$40,000 is not spent and that outside contributions offset the total cost.

Mayor Duggan stated that he heard Ms. Richman-Bell say that they would be covering the kids in need and he was wondering if scholarships need to be earmarked for Town children or if the dollars would go into general funds. Ms. Reynolds noted that she thought the funds would help with sponsoring programs. Mr. Hamby asked if it was for one year only and Ms. Reynolds noted that she understood they would not ask for it every year.

Mr. Godfrey asked for a consensus to increase the amount for the Boys and Girls Club to \$30,000. There was discussion of what the funds would be used for and Ms. Reynolds noted that it would not go to mortgage or salaries. Mr. Burnett was concerned it may set a precedent.

Majority of the Councilmembers supported the \$30,000 contribution to the Boys and Girls Club. Majority of Councilmembers supported the Town contribution to the Bluemont Concert Series be \$5,500 to make up the \$500 amount cut by the State. Mr. Carter suggested that work with the Experience Old Town Warrenton group to make up that amount next year.

Capital projects were discussed. The consensus was to delay the Eva Walker Park fence to FY 2019. Mr. Carter asked if a decision was made on the law enforcement vehicles and the Manager responded that he had gotten the impression when last discussed that they would be financed. Mr. Carter suggested the vehicles be purchased outright to save the interest and Ms. Reynolds agreed. Mayor Duggan asked if that was done if the overall budget would be increased. The Manager stated that instead of \$80,770 it would be six times the cost of a vehicle which is a much greater total expense. Chief Battle noted that he was not certain anything would be saved

because there is a 2-4% price increase annually plus whatever equipment cost might increase. Mr. Carter asked if there was a concern about taking delivery of all vehicles at the same time and Chief Battle noted that he could not purchase more than six per year. Mr. Carter again suggested that the six be purchased. Mr. Godfrey noted that the budget would increase from \$80,000 to \$480,000 and his recommendation was to finance them.

Mr. Polster asked about the lights for Franklin Street and the Manager stated that there are three options. He stated that there is a pretty good street lighting system currently there and some light heads could be added for \$1,500 or when the sidewalk is constructed lay some conduit to allow for future light installation. Mr. Godfrey stated for \$3,000 more ornamental lights could be installed. Ms. Reynolds noted that she is on the Design Committee for Experience Old Town Warrenton and could move the decorative lighting suggestion up with them. Mr. Tucker noted that Dominion Power has some lights that are decorative light. He stated that in the Warrenton Baptist Church lot a fluted fiberglass pole was used with an ornament head on top of it. He stated that the cost of cast iron 10 to 12 years ago was about \$3,000. Mr. Wood noted he was more inclined to go with standard street light at a \$7,500 cost. The Manager commented that would be the standard light with conduit for possible installation of decorative lights. It was noted that the Partnership added the existing lights on Main Street.

Mr. Tucker stated that there are currently four lights and they are just poles with heads and there are four or five more up to the darkest places of Franklin, Third and Green Streets and in front of Clare's. He said to add three additional lights to the existing poles would cost about \$1,200 to \$1,500. To run the conduit with casings and an ornamental-type light or the happy medium ones to put lights on existing poles and put conduit under the sidewalk to add light later. Ms. Reynolds noted she was leaning toward doing the decorative lights but not like the ones on Main Street because of their cost.

Mr. Hamby asked if a cost could be obtained for doing Fifth Street, Franklin Street parking lot and the Fifth Street corridor. Ms. Reynolds noted that whatever light is chosen it should be consistent in design. Ms. Reynolds noted that the matter could be brought before Council at a later meeting and if the new Experience Old Town Warrenton group wanted to take on selecting the design it would be fine. She noted that she is only a member of the Design Committee and would not speak for them. Mr. Godfrey noted that he would not try to redesign the light but because it is a new structure in the Historic District I guess it could be discussed. Mr. Kravetz noted that if it is just replicating what has already been approved why would revisit it. The Manager stated that the budget presented for adoption would have the cost of the lights on Franklin Street, the cost of lights on Fifth Street and in the parking lot to match the decorative lights that are here, but not of the same material. He stated that that would increase the capital projects fund for next year by \$30,000 for Franklin and, perhaps another \$30,000 for Fifth and then another \$10,000 for the parking lot.

As far as personnel costs, Ms. Reynolds noted that there needed to be a decision whether to hire full time or contract people. Mr. Godfrey noted that that information was provided in the justifications Council received. Mr. Carter stated that as staff are added that the maintain the same perspective as before and if the economy tanks and those hired run out of things to do the Town will have to act quickly. Mr. Kravetz commented that he assumed that there would be

attrition over the years. There was discussion of rental of office space and the Manager stated that in the general properties budget there are funds for short term lease. Mr. Kravetz asked if there was progress and the Manager stated he was not going to execute a lease until after the June 13 meeting.

Mr. Polster noted that the Council was to receive a projected carryover which would note the outstanding collection amount and tax amount. Mr. Godfrey questioned what tax Mr. Polster was talking about and Mr. Hamby noted that there had been discussion about how much sales tax had not been paid. Ms. Miller noted that she had been trying to estimate the BPOL. Mr. Polster noted that there had been talk about trying to get the fire department in the CIP for future years. Mr. Godfrey stated that he and Mr. Jason Golden had a conversation about when the next apparatus was coming up.

Mr. Hamby asked about the fiscal management policy. Mr. Godfrey noted that he would bring the draft to the June meeting and it could be adopted and incorporated into the FY 18 budget.

Mr. Polster noted that "laborer" had not been changed to "Maintenance worker" in every instance in the proposed budget.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Evelyn J. Weimer, Town Recorder