

Minutes
Spruce Pine Town Council Meeting
May 11, 2020 – 5:00 PM

A meeting/budget planning session of the Town Council was held on May 11, 2020 at 5:00 PM in the Board Room of Spruce Pine Town Hall. Present were Mayor Darla Harding and Council Members Rocky Buchanan, James Acuff, Jackie Rensink and Larry McKinney. Staff in attendance included Richard Canipe, Darlene Butler, and Crystal Young.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Harding called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Jackie Rensink gave the invocation. Larry McKinney led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Jackie Rensink moved to approve the agenda as presented. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Larry McKinney moved to approve the minutes of March 09, 2020. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Larry McKinney moved to approve the minutes of April 20, 2020. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with four in favor.

FINANCE

Finance Officer Crystal Young presented General Fund & Enterprise Fund Budget Ordinance Amendment #2, which increased the appropriation for the Pedestrian Bridge Project by \$143,000 and the Fire Department Contract by \$6,500. Revenues were increased from the General Fund for the Bridge Project, and 2019 property taxes for the Fire Department Contract. Enterprise fund accounts were increased by \$201,248 for the Capital Projects for the Bar Screen and 19E Sewer Line repairs. Retained earnings were increased by the same amount. Rocky Buchanan moved to adopt General Fund & Enterprise Fund Budget Ordinance Amendment #2 as presented. Larry McKinney seconded the motion which carried unanimously. Said amendment is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Crystal presented Sewer Rehabilitation Capital Project Ordinance Amendment #1 for Project #E-SRP-W-18-0157. The amendment adds \$77,385 in contingency funds to the project. Jackie Rensink moved to adopt the amendment as presented. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Said amendment is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Crystal presented a United Financial Proposal for financing four vehicles. She recommended accepting the option that requires semi annual payments. The interest rate is 1.82%. Rocky Buchanan moved to sign the loan document. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Said proposal is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

ADMINISTRATION

Town manager Richard Canipe presented a request from Beth Holmes, attorney for 130 of Chatham, to de-annex their property located on Swiss Pine Lake Drive (the former Swiss Pine Lake Watershed). Advantages to this de-annexation would include no required future provision of water and sewer at town expense to the remote property. Additionally, the de-annexation would increase the available limit on non-contiguous annexations into the city limits. De-annexation of the approximately 400 acres would require local legislation initiated by our state representative or senator. Jackie Rensink moved to direct Richard Canipe to request initiation this legislative action. Rocky Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Said de-annexation request is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Richard presented a Resolution in Support of the NCDOT Pedestrian Bridge Project. Rocky Buchanan moved to adopt the resolution as presented. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Said Resolution is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Richard updated the Council on Covid-19 protocol and proposed cancellations. He advised that NC Rural Water will provide several masks for each employee. The town hall office staff is working a regular schedule this week, though the lobby remains closed. A Plexiglas barrier has been installed at the walk in counter. After discussion, the Council decided not to open the pool or schedule fireworks for the 2020 season.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Crystal presented the proposed budget, noting that all capital requests are included for discussion purposes. A 1.6% cost of living increase is included.

Main Street funding includes funds for offering a skate rink near Christmas. Main Street cancelled the Blacksmith Festival for this year.

For the administrative department, the budget includes funding for a new website and cemetery database.

Miscellaneous funding for the Mitchell Chamber of Commerce and Mitchell County Animal Rescue is included. No funding for Mayland Community College for the next fiscal year is included.

For the police department, Council opted to omit proposed incentive increases and clothing allowance for detectives. Two police vehicles are budgeted, as well as new striping for current vehicles.

For public works, Council opted to budget for two vehicles, and new lighting for the shop. They opted to leave the leaf blower assembly for another year.

For parks and recreation, Council opted to seek quotes for repairing the restrooms at Brad Ragan Park, rather than replacement. The power washer is budgeted. Grant match funds will be considered case by case. Council Member Rocky Buchanan suggested that the Town consider charging for all shelter reservations at some future point.

Council opted for a \$7000 increase for the Spruce Pine Public Library.

Funding is included for repaving Greenwood Rd., English Rd., East Peterson Rd., Woodland Rd., and McKinney Rd.

The water and sewer budget includes a \$0.10 increase on sewer rate usage tiers over the minimum 2000 gallons. All water and sewer capital requests are included in the proposed budget. The administrative water and sewer budget includes funding for 200 radio-read meters, and a Capital Improvements Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

Consensus of the Council was to cancel the second regular meeting in May, and to conduct the public hearing on the budget on June 8. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by motion of Council Member Jackie Rensink.

Darlene J. Butler, Town Clerk

Darla Harding, Mayor

James Acuff, Council Member

Rocky Buchanan, Council Member

Larry McKinney, Council Member

Jackie Rensink, Council Member