

Zebulon Board of Commissioners
Budget Work Session
Minutes
June 13, 2022

Present: Glenn York, Beverly Clark, Quentin Miles, Shannon Baxter, Larry Loucks, Jessica Harrison, Joe Moore-Town Manager, Lisa Markland-Town Clerk, Bobby Fitts-Finance, Chris Perry-Fire, Chris Ray-Public Works, Sheila Long-Parks and Recreation, Jacqui Boykin-Police, Michael Clark-Planning, Sam Slater-Attorney

Mayor York called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Clark made a motion, second by Commissioner Miles to approve the agenda. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

BUDGET

A. Budget 2022-2023

1. Ordinance 2022-51

Joe Moore explained staff was available to answer any questions regarding the FY 23 budget.

Commissioner Loucks had questions under the Governing Board budget about citizens academy, laptops for the Board, renovating a Board office space and the Strategic Plan grants.

The requested budget for professional fees was \$325,000 and Commissioner Baxter stated she was uncomfortable with the \$25,000 increase in legal fees and wanted Wyrick Robbins to strictly be the attorney for the Board and staff should have their own attorney. Commissioner Clark stated Wyrick Robbins was the Town Attorney and represented the both the Board and departments of the Town.

Mayor York stated there would be an update to the agreement with the Town Attorney and would create an evaluation system.

There was discussion about iPads or laptops for the Board. There was consensus among the Board for a laptop for each Board member. Lisa Markland clarified that a laptop would cost approximately \$1,200 and a touch screen laptop could be approximately \$2,000 to \$3,000 each.

There was consensus to fund \$15,000 would go into materials and supplies for Board laptops and to identify the revenue stream for the laptops.

Commissioner Baxter asked about office space for the Commissioners. There was discussion about upfit of office space for the Board. Commissioner Clark stated that she thought the Board already had an office and asked if was still there. Joe Moore stated the Board had 24-hour access to Town Hall, there was an office designated for Board use and the conference rooms were available to be reserved with the Clerk for meetings. Commissioner Clark said that there was not a need for all the Commissioners to have an individual office. Commissioner Loucks stated that he thought it

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would be good to use that office first to see how much it was used to determine if additional space was necessary. Commissioner Harrison agreed with that thought process of seeing how it was utilized. Mayor York stated his office was also available for Board use.

Commissioner Miles asked about the cell phones for Commissioners. Commissioner Baxter asked if there were any employees that did not get their cell phone paid for. Lisa Markland stated 61 employees received a cell phone reimbursement of either \$35 or \$50 and it was explained how the employee's reimbursement amount was determined. Commissioner Loucks suggested writing an updated cell phone reimbursement policy.

Commissioner Miles asked about the Board getting it and he has a 2nd line that he paid for. Commissioner Harrison said she had Google voice with a 2nd number that was free and she thought the cost to the Town for employees was an effective use of Town funds.

The Board asked about the Appointed Board recognition line item and asked how it was spent. Joe Moore explained that the thought was that it could be utilized to recognize committees

Commissioner Baxter asked about the equipment maintenance. Bobby Fitts talked about the equipment that required maintenance and the various contract services under the Finance Department's budget.

Commissioner Miles asked about contract services. Bobby explained that it was for software maintenance, and equipment maintenance contracts.

Commissioner Loucks asked about the increase in the retirees' insurance benefits was a due to and why it was increasing. It was explained that there were quite a few retirees in the last few years.

Commissioner Baxter asked what DEI stood for in the Administration budget. Joe Moore stated it stood for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Commissioner Baxter stated that the retention bonuses should be removed from the budget due to performance issues and didn't feel comfortable giving those people bonuses. However, she did feel comfortable with giving retention bonuses to Fire and Police to deal with their compression. Commissioner Loucks asked if the \$350,000 was for everyone.

Chris Perry and Joe Moore spoke about Wake County's retention program. It was stated this program was intended to retain employees and would not address compression.

Commissioner Baxter asked what his department would need based on what Wake County was offering. Chris Perry stated that of the \$4000, Wake County would cover about \$1500 of it. Chris Perry stated that part of the compression was addressed in the budget and the starting salary was increased that would also address the pay of all employees in the Fire Department.

Commissioner Baxter stated that she would rather make salary adjustments instead of handing out a bonus where the employee would not receive the entire amount.

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Commissioner Harrison stated it was unfair to state some employees were more valuable or deserving than others and to only give the retention bonuses to certain departments. She was concerned that some employees were being devalued. Commissioner Harrison wanted all employees to be valued.

Commissioner Miles stated that according to the pay schedule the other employees were paid competitively with other municipalities. However, the police and fire departments were under paid.

Joe Moore spoke in detail about Wake County's retention bonus program. The County was paying the bonus to all county employees and had a cost share arrangement with the Town of Zebulon therefore was offering to pay 38% of the retention pay to the Town of Zebulon's Fire Department employees. Joe stated that the four options available to the Board were to turn down the retention offer, accept offer just for the fire department at the proportional amount, match it for just fire department and give it to all employees.

The sliding scale that Wake County was offering their employees was explained.

Commissioners Clark and Harrison wanted the retention pay to go to all employees. Commissioner Loucks stated he wanted all employees to be treated fairly. Commissioners Baxter and Miles wanted the retention pay to go to Fire employees only.

Commissioner Loucks offered a \$2000 retention bonus for all employees.

Commissioner Miles asked about employee appreciation budget. It was explained it included events for employees such as the family Mudcats game, years of service breakfast and the Christmas luncheon.

Commissioner Loucks asked about the safety budget increase and what it included. Lisa Markland stated it was to include professional development and a new software program to track accidents. Chris Perry spoke about the benefits of the program, explaining it was a tracking mechanism and did the reporting to the State. There was discussion to wait on funding the safety program.

Commissioner Miles asked about the Wellness program. It was explained the wellness budget included biometric screenings, flu shot clinics, heat safety, health and nutrition classes, onsite physicals and mammograms.

The retention bonus was discussed again. Commissioner Miles was on board with funding fire and police. Commissioner Loucks suggested a 50% retention bonus of \$2,000 for all employees regardless of salary. There was agreement among the Board.

Commissioner Loucks inquired about the Planning department uniform budget. Michael Clark explained the uniform budget was used mostly for the code enforcement position but others in the department were able to get a polo shirt.

Commissioner Miles asked about the professional services line and what it was for. It was explained it was for software packages, GIS software, outside consultants and iPad service for the

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code enforcement officer. Commissioner Miles asked about the cell phone reimbursement in the department and Mike explained that only three people in the department received a reimbursement. Commissioner Loucks asked about the accreditation planner position and the timeline for completion. Jacqui Boykin spoke about the Police accreditation process taking up to 36 months to complete and it being a continual process to keep accreditation.

Commissioner Baxter asked for an explanation of contract services in the Police Department budget if the price for accreditation would decrease after it was complete. Chief Boykin stated it would be \$4200 annually and included CAD dispatch, 800 mhz system, background, SBI and other criminal justice systems.

Commissioner Harrison asked about the body camera line item. Chief Boykin explained that it was moved into the service equipment line item and all equipment was being put on a replacement rotation cycle for each year.

Commissioner Miles asked about Zebulon Night Out. It was stated that it was postponed due to COVID and there were plans to bring it back in the future.

Commissioner Baxter asked when the separation allowance for retired police officers would end. Bobby Fitts was stated the Police retirement separation allowance ended at age 62. Commissioner Baxter asked if they have a job elsewhere would that still have to be paid. Bobby stated that it was mandated by state statute

Commissioner Loucks asked to see cameras added downtown and at major intersections around Town. Commissioner Miles asked about the placement of the Flock cameras and if there were regulations on where and when they would be used. Chief Boykin said that are no rules or regulations on how they will be used. The two cameras had been ordered and should be in around August and there were two locations in Town that the police department thought that if the cameras were placed there it would improve the ability to identify offenders.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the location of the salary compression funds. Jacqui Boykin explained it was in the salary line item that included career development.

Commissioner Loucks asked about the BLET sponsorship and recruitment. Chief Boykin gave her viewpoint on BLET sponsorships but wanted it to be the right person that would be successful in the program.

Commissioner Baxter said that she would like to see what the other fringe benefit line item was for. Fire Chief Chris Perry spoke about items in the budget including fringe benefit volunteer pay, the Junior Firefighter Program, contract services and medical exams. Commissioner Baxter continued by asking about the salary line item increase. Chief Perry stated it included the increase to the starting salaries and the increase to other salaries within the department. The adjustment was a good step to address compression and the current salaries to be more competitive.

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Commissioner Loucks asked about the cell phone reimbursement. Chief Perry explained who was receiving reimbursement and the amounts as well as the ability to save money by purchasing it through the county.

Commissioner Miles asked about volunteer pay. Chris explained it was on a per call basis of \$9 to offset their expenses. Each call tracks those that respond.

Commissioner Miles asked about contract services. Chris Perry said that contract services was normally reoccurring expenses like pest control, records management software, scheduling software. Commissioner Miles inquired about the level of involvement Ron handled those services. Chief Perry stated that Ron handled the infrastructure, desktops etc., he did not deal with the online software or the equipment in the vehicles.

Commissioner Baxter asked about medical exams. It was explained that the exams were a fit for duty exam that all firefighters had to take once a year. New hires had to take the exams as well.

Commissioner Loucks asked about the part time salary for the market. Sheila Long spoke about the budget for the Artisan Market and part time staff which was moved to special events. Commissioner Baxter asked how much was allocated to the market specifically. Sheila explained \$2500 was for part time staff and \$7500 was for the market to operate.

Commissioner Baxter expressed concerns about female sports uniforms and thought that what was provided was not appropriate and wanted uniforms that mirrored the boy's uniforms. Staff would research other uniform options and asked for parents to share any uniform concerns they had. Commissioner Harrison asked if the uniforms for girls was consistent with other municipalities and Sheila stated she had reached out and was told they were.

Commissioner Loucks said that he would like to see local businesses sponsoring teams. There was discussion about getting local businesses to participate and the need for additional employees that would be able to focus on getting coaches and sponsors for sports teams.

Commissioner Miles asked about the EBT program not continuing. Sheila said the EBT program at the market was not discontinued. It was explained that it was a donation and when the funds were received, they would be recognized. No Town funds were used for the EBT program. Commissioner Miles also asked why the Town did not have a rec football league (mighty mite football). Sheila Long explained that it would be where the league would apply for a grant for the league. Sheila went on to explain to have Town rec football league other towns would have to offer it as well. The Town provides the facilities and maintain those fields. Finally, he asked about the percent of work that was contracted out for park landscaping. Sheila said that the contracting was a short term plan to address an existing issue. When the staff grows and can accommodate the work the contracts would go away and be brought back in house.

The Board took a 10-minute recess.

The meeting reconvened at 7:55pm.

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Commissioners asked about the engineering position. Chris Ray spoke about the engineer position for the stormwater system permit requirements as well and development review. Commissioner Baxter asked about the increase to the water and sewer usage.

Commissioner Miles asked the vacant positions and what was being done to fill those positions. Chris explained that two had been filled, interviews were in the works for one position and the rewriting of another was underway.

Commissioner Miles asked about the cost of streetlights and who pays for that. There was an explanation that the subdivision paid for installation of the light equipment and then the town was responsible for the cost of lighting along all streets but not in the common areas.

Town Manager Joe Moore thanked Commissioner Loucks for coming in and discussing some of his concerns so that staff could research and be prepared to answer questions. Joe Moore said on the plan for the future was to have an Community and Economic Development department which would house the full time Main Street position and Economic Development Specialist that was being proposed in the Planning department until the Community and Economic Development department was created. Joe Moore stated the Economic Development Specialist was inadvertently omitted in the current budget ordinance and was not funded. It was further explained that Bobby Fitts created a new budget ordinance that included the Economic Development Specialist and was handed out to the Board. Commissioner Miles asked if the two positions could be one position. Mike Clark explained responsibilities of the positions and the requirements of the Main Street Program and position.

Commissioner Miles asked if the other Board members thought the Town was large enough to need an Economic Development Specialist. Commissioner Loucks, Clark and Harrison thought the Town was overdue for the economic development position.

Commissioner Loucks asked if the Main Street person would do the leading of the downtown programs like rock the block, tree lighting etc. Mike explained that the position could not replace what was already being done but to supplement the programs. Commissioner Loucks wanted to ensure that there was 40 hours of work for all full time positions. The change from the DAC to the full time Main Street Program were explained and how they would be coordinating with current staff of the Town and the Chamber. Commissioner Miles said that he did not see any old or dilapidated buildings in the downtown so that would not be something the Town would have to deal with. It was explained that there were buildings that were dilapidated and that also included infrastructure needs.

Commissioner Baxter had questions about some of the schedules. On sheet D6 she pointed out a spelling change in the fee schedule and asked about the air compressor rate.

There was a request for more detail about the Public Information Officer position. Joe Moore stated the Town reached its capacity in putting out information by department. The PIO position would give more consistency and would get additional information out to citizens. The position would manage the Town brand that would be adopted in FY 2023 and it would be used appropriately both internally and externally. The Town app that the Board has shown an interest in would

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manage that as well. Joe stated that the job description could be brought back to ensure it would be doing what the Board would like to see the position do.

Commissioner Baxter said she would like to see the job description for the PIO position, but also would like to know if the position would be providing a former request of the Board to have a calendar with a full listing of events prior to them occurring. It could be a consideration in the job description. Commissioner Loucks said that he did not know if the PIO was a full time position could be the PIO and Assistant Town Manager. There was agreement among the Board. Commissioner Clark said that there would need to be an adjustment to the salary if additional duties were to be added.

Commissioner Loucks asked about page E5 in the CIP budget as it pertained to 800 mhz radios. Chris Perry explained the 800 mhz radios were an upgrade to the current radios and was a cost share with Wake County.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the safety house and not purchasing so as to not incur the cost of the house. Chief Perry said that he was not aware of where it could be rented from and thought that it was a fraction of the cost and a savings. Possibly purchasing it in partnership with another entity could save money and it would last 8-10 years.

Commissioner Miles asked about the sleeping quarters and not spending the funds since building a new facility. Commissioner Clark said that the new building was 3-4 years out and the current crews did not have adequate sleeping quarters. It also addressed safety of staff.

Commissioner Loucks proposed moving the Town Hall weather camera from FY 2024 to FY 2023 and to use the funds allocated for the safety committee towards the camera. The funds would come out of the general fund.

Commissioner Miles asked about the Economic Development Strategic Plan and if the \$50,000 was still needed. Mike Clark explained that it would be the guidebook that the Economic Development Specialist would follow on how the Town would want to grow and expand. Commissioner Loucks asked if the person being hired would be able to develop that document. Mike stated the position would be integral part of its development but there were partnerships in Raleigh and Wake County that would need input and it was the same as hiring a professional to write the Land Use Plan. The outside perspective would be very important.

Commissioner Loucks asked about the writing of the emergency operations plan by a consultant when staff could do it. Chris Perry spoke about the work to be performed by the emergency operations plan consultant and the fact that staff had already written 80% of the plan. Chris also explained that the plan was the most important part of receiving emergency funds.

Commissioner Baxter asked to see the application submitted for the congressional grant the Town received from Rep. Price's office.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the fire signal at Judd and Arendell and if it could be delayed until FY 24.

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Commissioner Miles asked about the card access system and parking at the Police Department. Chief Boykin explained the key card access and additional parking plans for the Police Department. There were only two parking spaces currently and it would provide four spaces.

Commissioner Loucks asked about the driving apron and entrance gate at Five County Stadium. Chris Ray said that the driving apron and entrance gate for Five County Stadium was causing a lot of issues with the rutting of the parking lot. The repairs would reduce the cost and liability for the Town.

Commissioner Loucks asked to see a profit and loss statement and actual expenses at the stadium as it relates to the revenue received. Joe Moore said that at the July monthly meetings there would be information about the cost associated with the stadium and other expenses and uses.

Commissioner Miles wanted to talk about the cost of the Public Works Shed at \$533,000. Chris Ray said it was \$350,000 in the FY 22 budget the cost increased and the following items were added to include a camera, unisex bathroom, eyewash station and a hand sink. \$350,000 was already budgeted.

Commissioner Loucks asked about the upgrades to the fueling station. Chris Ray explained that the fueling station pedestal from 18 years old and needed to be upgraded and/or replaced. It would also upgrade the vehicle tracking, leak detection equipment, and tank monitoring.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the \$221,000 sleeping quarters and the additional amounts listed on E6 spreadsheet. Joe Moore said at the bottom where it was showing the revenue it was identify where that money would be going.

Commissioner Baxter referenced E2 on the W. Sycamore and W. Gannon sidewalk projects. It was requested to repair the sidewalk further down W. Gannon because pieces were missing and was dangerous. The project was estimated to cost \$80,000 and would be added to the sidewalk walkability project to get economies of scale. Joe said that the sidewalk was too narrow and would have to be widened to five foot and \$80,000 would be the appropriate estimate. This project would be the W. Gannon sidewalk improvement project.

Commissioner Miles referenced D21 the Commissioners pay schedule. Commissioner Baxter said Wake County adjusted the pay for their Commissioners but that would be too much for the Town to adjust the same way. She stated she spent a lot of time in the community and wanted to see a pay increase for the Board to cover her expenses. Commissioner Harrison agreed and thought an increase would be reasonable. Commissioner Loucks stated that they received a stipend of \$5533 per year plus opting in for insurance at \$6000 for a little over \$11,000 a year. Commissioner Clark stated the pay should be comparable to other municipalities and reminded everyone the position was a service to the community. There was discussion about the pay comparison that was done to other municipalities.

Mayor York asked if the numbers shared included the cost for health insurance. It was explained that Oxford, Rolesville and Wake Forest did not pay for insurance. Commissioner Miles explained that it took money and fuel to do the job. Commissioner Baxter said she thought 30% increase

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would be appropriate, but she also said she threw out that number because she did not have a calculator. Commissioner Miles asked about a formula for figuring compensation for commissioners. Joe Moore stated that there was not a formula that he was aware of.

Mayor York did not realize there was a pay associated with the position when he ran for election and Board members would never be fully compensated for the work that was put in.

Joe Moore stated the topic could be added to the August work session to discuss further.

Commissioner Baxter made a motion, second by Commissioner Harrison to table the Board salaries for further discussion at the August work session. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the ARPA funding. There were concerns expressed about spending all the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) on stormwater. Commissioner Miles wanted citizens to see where the funds were spent and for the funds to benefit them. Commissioner Harrison said that investment in stormwater was needed but the ARPA funds should be spent in a way that directly impacted the citizens. There was a consensus to place the ARPA funds on hold to have further discussions about how to spend the funds.

The Board took a 10-minute recess.

The meeting reconvened at 9:36pm.

Commissioner Baxter referenced E7 and asked about the signage. It was stated the proposed park signage included the updated branding. Commissioner Baxter asked about the damage at the tennis court. Sheila Long stated the tennis courts were damaged prior to power washing by a contractor. It was explained that the power washing caused discoloration not divots to the surface. The project would resurface the courts. The Commissioner asked about the expansion of Whitley Park. Sheila explained that the project is still being discussed and the cost of the project would come back to the Board.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the cost of the grant for Little River Park. It was explained that the consultant would be writing the grant. Sheila Long explained that when the consultants for the Master Plan were hired, Commissioner Loucks asked if they would be able to identify and obtain funding for projects and this is what has occurred with this grant.

Joe Moore gave the options to the Board as it relates to the budget 1) to table the budget ordinance to a future date, 2) adopt the budget ordinance handed out with specific changes and the amendments listed or 3) adopt the budget ordinance with a budget amendment meeting to be scheduled at an August meeting.

Commissioner Clark said she would like to do option three to adopt the budget ordinance now and then schedule a budget meeting in August to address the changes the Board wanted.

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Commissioner Miles and Baxter wanted to table the budget ordinance for citizens to watch the meeting and give feedback.

Commissioner Loucks said that adopting the budget ordinance and then at the August 9th meeting the items in question could be discussed. Commissioner Harrison and Commissioner Clark agreed with that.

Commissioner Clark made a motion, second by Commissioner Harrison to approve Ordinance 2022-51 handed out at the meeting with a budget meeting on August 9. Commissioner Loucks stated that there were only five items that were changed, and he would be happy to type them up and email them out for discussion in August. Commissioners Miles and Baxter wanted to table for further discussion. The motion failed with a vote of 2 to 3 with Commissioners Clark and Harrison voting in favor and Commissioners Loucks, Miles and Baxter voting in opposition.

Commissioner Baxter made a motion to table Ordinance 2022-51 to a future date. Commissioner Baxter withdrew her motion.

Commissioner Harrison asked what needed to be discussed further. Commissioner Miles said that he wanted to allow for the citizens to talk to him.

Commissioner Loucks made a motion, second by Harrison to approve Ordinance 2022-51 handed out at the meeting with the following amendments:

- Governing Board materials and supplies increased by \$15,000 to \$18,400 for Board laptops funding to come from the General Fund
- Administration Safety Committee budget reduced by \$10,000 to \$1,167 and savings to go into the General Fund
- Administration Retention bonuses reduced by \$175,000 to \$175,000 for a \$2,000 bonus to all full-time employees and savings to go into the General Fund
- Capital Budget - Weather camera moved from FY 24 to FY 23 for an increase of \$12,000 funding to come from the General Fund
- Capital Budget Sheet E1 - Judd and Arendell Fire signal reduced to \$0 and saving of \$100,000 to go into the General Fund
- Capital Budget Sheet E2 - W. Sycamore and Arendell sidewalk project add W. Gannon sidewalk improvements increased by \$80,000 to \$395,000 with funding to come from the General Fund

Commissioner Miles said that they are moving too fast and why not wait a day or two.

There was no further discussion and the motion passed with vote 3 to 2 with Commissioners Loucks, Harrison and Clark voting in favor and Commissioners Miles and Baxter voting in opposition.

Commissioner Loucks would be out of town on August 25 during the mini retreat and asked to schedule the meeting to September 8. Joe Moore stated staff would bring a schedule revision at the August meeting.

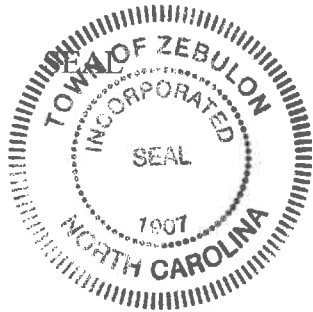
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Commissioner Miles stated that he voted against it because he need additional due diligence prior to adoption.

Mayor York thanked staff for all their work on the budget.

The meeting was adjourned by consensus

Adopted this the 9th day of August 2022.




Glenn L. York—Mayor


Lisa M. Markland, CMC—Town Clerk