

Zebulon Board of Commissioners
Work Session
Minutes
May 30, 2024

Present: Mayor Glenn York, Quentin Miles, Beverly Clark, Shannon Baxter, Amber Davis, Joe Moore-Town Manager, Lisa Markland-Town Clerk, Chris Ray-Public Works, Bobby Fitts-Finance, Jacqui Boykin-Police, Michael Clark-Planning, Sheila Long-Parks and Recreation, Kaleb Harmon-Communications, Shannon Johnson-Economic Development, Eric Vernon-Attorney

Absent: Jessica Harrison

Mayor York called the meeting to order at 6:03pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

MEETING SCHEDULE

Joe Moore presented the meeting schedule amendments:

1. Changing the work session start time to 6:00pm
2. Moving the June 11, 2024 meeting to June 13, 2024
3. Call for Public Hearing on the Bond for June 13, 2024

Commissioner Davis stated East Wake High School's graduation was on June 13 at 4:00pm. There was consensus to move the meeting to June 18.

Commissioner Baxter made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to conduct the bond public hearing on June 18, 2024 at 6:00pm. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Baxter made a motion, second by Commissioner Davis to start all work sessions at 6:00pm. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

FY '25 BUDGET

Joe Moore spoke about what was needed for the Christmas parade and suggested scaling back other Town events to accommodate the parade. There were concerns about finding staff availability to be able to hold the event.

Commissioner Baxter stated she had heard from people in the community that they wanted a Christmas parade and wanted to allocate funds to secure volunteers to move forward. Commissioner Miles agreed. There was discussion about working to get support from the community to help hold the parade. Commissioner Clark stated the work should not all fall on staff and had concerns about staff's capacity. Joe Moore explained volunteers required staffing and the

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sense of urgency would be the Board's consideration to possibly remove other events to hold the parade.

Commissioner Miles recommended adding \$25,000 to the parade fund and ask local organizations to help with the parade. There was discussion about a establishing a parade policy.

Commissioner Baxter suggested putting out a request for volunteers and talking about the parade again at the June 3, 2024 meeting. Joe Moore stated there was not enough capacity of staff in such a short time and recommended incorporating the items the Board wanted added to the budget public hearing which included the parade, Gill Street bathroom and the splash pad. Commissioner Miles suggested removing Candy Cane Lane to make the parade a priority. Commissioner Clark did not want to sacrifice the Candy Cane Lane event for a parade and felt the event reached more people than a parade.

There was consensus among the Board to bring back the parade discussion to the June 3, 2024 budget public hearing and to budget \$25,000. Staff would bring back information for the Board to consider.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the personnel market adjustments. Staff stated there would be a 3% raise across the board except for hard to recruit positions which would receive 5%. Those positions were primarily Police and Planning. The merit increase was up to 5% based on performance and any lapsed salaries would be rolled back into the general fund.

It was suggested by Commissioner Baxter to remove the bridge repair project on Barbee Street to fund an additional police officer. Staff stated that was an operating expense and the bridge was a capital expense. Any offset to the operating expense would need to be another operating expense. Commissioner Baxter asked to remove the Governing Board's Administrative Assistant and there would be less pressure on HR once a clerk was hired and additional personnel would not be necessary.

There was a question about the costs for the police position. Chief Boykin stated the costs for an additional officer would be approximately \$180,000 including the salary, uniform, benefits vehicle, and equipment. The recommended budget included two watch commanders and a detective. Chief Boykin stated there were currently four positions open.

Commissioner Baxter asked if the market adjustments would help with the recruiting efforts which Chief Boykin explained it made progress to where the department needed to be. Commissioner Baxter stated she wanted employees to be paid what they were worth. The base needed to be \$52,000 to make the Police Department attractive within the labor shed. There was discussion about the time to fill vacant positions. Chief Boykin spoke about the lapsed salaries for the positions that could not be filled immediately. Joe Moore spoke about the ripple effect of increasing starting salary in the Police Department and some recommended positions would need to be eliminated to increase salaries.

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Joe Moore stated staff would include the options for the Board at their budget public hearing. Either there would need to be a tax increase, or recommended positions would need to be removed to fund the changes.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the fund balance percentage. Bobby Fitts stated it would be approximately 40%. Moore explained that did not include the Board's proposed splash pad and Gill Street bathroom project and would bring the percentage down. The Town's fund balance policy was 30%.

There was discussion about the proposed Board's retreat, salaries for the administrative assistant and budget analyst, and professional services. Commissioner Miles asked about the costs for early polling sites. Lisa Markland stated the cost was over \$100,000.

Mayor York stated there would be a five-minute recess.

The meeting resumed at 7:31pm.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the line item for \$130,000 for professional services in the administration budget. Lisa Markland stated she would provide that information to the Board. It was also asked about the safety committee budget which included safety software and conferences.

There was discussion about the website administrator and Kaleb Harmon provided an update on the website services.

Commissioner Baxter suggested an employee survey to assess how the wellness program was being received and utilized. Lisa Markland spoke about the wellness grant from Blue Cross and Blue Shield and how the funds were utilized toward the wellness program.

Commissioner Miles stated he would like a copy of the contract with PEG Media and to look at other options other than contracting with PEG Media.

There was a request for information on the Cost of Housing Infrastructure Program. Joe Moore explained Michael Clark was in attendance and would provide that information to the Board.

Staff was asked to bring back information on the funding that was secured by Deborah Ross' office for expanded bus connectivity in eastern Wake County.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the internal market study audit for salary compensation and Chris Ray stated there was a market study request for Public Works to ensure their salaries were competitive.

There was a question about the Downtown Improvement grants. Shannon Johnson stated there would be façade grants in FY '25, but the Main Street Board was looking into adding additional grants that were done in downtowns. There was discussion about the Main Street Coordinator's position, training and salary.

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Commissioner Baxter stated she wanted to discuss what was involved with the fee schedule and what it was charging for at the next meeting.

Staff was asked to have consistency on how CIP projects were prioritized.

Chris Perry was asked to speak about the Knox boxes and why it was the Fire Department that provided them instead of the business owner. The business covered the cost of purchasing and installing the box. The cost to the Town was for a more secure key fob system.

Commissioner Baxter stated she was uncomfortable with the design and construction decision to renovate Town Hall and the Police Station and asked staff to remove it from the budget. Commissioner Miles stated he felt the same way. Joe Moore explained there was \$170,000 allocated for Town Hall and \$110,000 allocated for the Police Department. The goal was to utilize the existing space now to make it usable with cubicles and renovation.

There was discussion about the land acquisition for fire station three. Joe Moore stated those funds were to look for and acquire land for fire station three. Fire station two funds were already in the budget.

Commissioner Baxter stated she did not want to put money into developing a large and expensive renovation project and was not agreeable to allocate \$280,000 in funds to make office space in Town Hall and the Police Department useable. Commissioner Baxter did not want the Police kitchen renovated since it was done a couple of years ago. There was a request by Commissioner Baxter to add the reorganization to the June 3 meeting for further discussion.

There was discussion about the pedestrian bridge at Barbee Street. Commissioner Baxter asked to have the \$90,000 in funds removed from the budget.

Commissioner Baxter explained the Board was not comfortable purchasing a new park and wanted more information before a park was purchased. It was requested that a contingency be added that the \$1.05 million in funds would be released only with Board approval.

There were concerns about the \$350,000 allocated funds to complete the green spine with the mudcats leaving. Sheila Long spoke about other options with Phase II of Beaverdam Creek and the Downtown connector segment of the greenway. The funds could begin the design process of the greenway segments.

Commissioner Baxter asked if the splash pad for Community Park was included in the budget. Sheila Long stated it was not because the splash pad was not recommended for funding at any park for next year. The splash pad was included in the Parks and Recreation CIP for the future.

Mayor York stated there would be a ten-minute recess.

The meeting reconvened at 8:46pm.

CLOSED SESSION

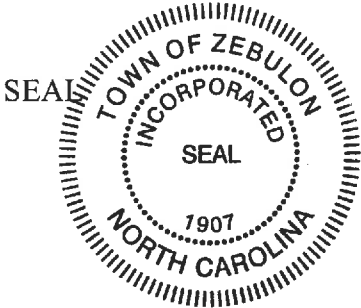
The Board needed a motion to go into closed session under NC GS 143-381.11(a)(5) for the purpose to consult with the Town Attorney.

Commissioner Baxter made a motion, second by Commissioner Davis to go into closed session. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

NOTE: In closed session, Commissioner Clark made a motion, second by Commissioner Baxter to come out of closed session. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Davis made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to adjourn. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Adopted this the 9th day of September 2024.



Glenn L. York
Glenn L. York—Mayor

Lisa M. Markland
Lisa M. Markland, CMC—Town Clerk