

The Smithfield Town Council continued the recessed May 23, 2016 budget work session on Monday, June 1, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Smithfield Town Hall. Mayor M. Andy Moore presided.

Councilmen Present:

Emery D. Ashley, Mayor Pro-Tem
Marlon Lee, District 1
J. Perry Harris, District 2
Travis Scott, District 3
Roger A. Wood, District 4
Stephen Rabil, At-Large

Councilmen Absent

John A. Dunn, At-Large

Administrative Staff Present

Michael L. Scott, Town Manager
Jim Freeman, Interim Town Manager
John Blanton, Fire Chief
Lenny Branch, Public Works Director
Ted Credle, Public Utilities Director
R. Keith Powell, Interim Chief of Police
Greg Siler, Finance Director
Shannan Williams, Town Clerk

Mayor Moore reconvened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Johnston County Visitor's Bureau

Donna Bailey-Taylor Executive Director presented to Council a report of how tourism dollars are spent. Of the 206,678.31 in revenues there is a 155 administrative fee (\$31,001.74) that JCVB keeps. Marketing campaigns total \$106,225.62. Tourism related projects total \$55,000.00 and Revenues placed in reserves total \$24,053.22. Ms. Bailey-Taylor also reported there is \$95,000 in a reserve fund

Mayor Moore questioned how the Town of Smithfield is marketed. Ms. Bailey-Taylor responded that a marketing committee appointed by the Council determines how the funds are spent.

Councilman Scott questioned if the funds for Wayfinding would be utilized for the construction of the signs. Ms. Bailey-Taylor responded that if those funds are not used by June 30th they will go into the reserve fund.

Councilman Scott also questioned the \$10,000 that was allocated to the Smithfield Recreation and Aquatics Center. Ms. Bailey-Taylor responded that the JCVB has been supporting Parks and Recreation because of the events that draw people into the town.

Mayor Pro-tem Ashley questioned if tourism dollars could be used for road improvements like Venture Drive. Ms. Bailey-Taylor responded that if the JCVB can't market it then tourism dollars could not be used.

Councilman Harris questioned if the construction of the Wayfinding signs would be put out for bid. Ms. Bailey-Taylor responded that the committee worked for about a year and a decision would have to be made as to where the signs would be placed. A full presentation to the Council would need to be made to determine our next course of action, but the Wayfinding System would need to be adopted first. Ms. Bailey –Taylor provided information on improvements to the Town Commons areas.

AVA Gardner Museum

Deanna Brandenberger Executive Director addressed the Council on the funding request of \$42,000. She explained the Ava Gardner Museum promotes everyone downtown. The museum needs assistance with a fire suppression system which is estimated to cost \$94,000-\$96,000. She explained there is currently a GoFundMe campaign that has raised less than \$3,000 to assist with this. Ms. Brandenberger explained that the museum has an estimated 10,000 visitors a year and the Town owns ¼ of the collection.

Councilman Rabil questioned if the museum receives any funding from the County. Ms. Brandenberger responded the museum does not receive any funding from the County.

Non-Profits

Public Library

Town Manager Michael Scott addressed the Council on the request by the Public Library for the proposed roof replacement. The agreement approved by the Council on December 8, 2015 was for unbudgeted expenditures. If the Town uses the equation for unbudgeted funds whereby the Library pays \$4,000, the County pays 60% and the Town pays 40% of the repair costs, the Town would need to reimburse the Library \$28,000 for the roof replacement.

Councilman Wood made a motion, seconded by Councilman Rabil, to encumber \$28,000 in the current fiscal year for the roof replacement at the Library. These funds will be reimbursed to the Library. Unanimously approved.

F(X) Robotics Request

The Council had general discussion concerning funding the request.

Councilman Wood made a motion, seconded by Councilman Scott, to provide \$2,000.00 to the F(X) Robotics Team at Smithfield Selma High School payable through the school. Councilman Wood, Councilman Scott, Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley, Councilman Harris and Councilman Rabil voted in favor of the motion. Councilman Lee voted against the motion. Motion carried 5-1.

Triangle J Council of Governments

Councilman Harris questioned if the Town was benefiting from the Triangle J Council. Mr. Scott responded he will be meeting with Triangle J representatives. Councilman Scott explained they do provide debriefing services to public safety in tragic situations. It was the consensus of the Council to allow the funds to remain, but assess it and no funds can be spent until approved by the Council.

Economic Development and the PEG Channel

Councilman Harris suggested approval for the expenditure for Economic Development and PEG money be approved by the Council. PEG money is a pass through Economic Development funds.

Councilman Harris made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley, that all funds to be spent from the Economic Development line item must be approved by the Council. Unanimously approved.

Ava Gardner Museum – Fire suppression system

Councilman Wood sought direction from the Council on loaning the Ava Gardner Museum the funds needed for a fire suppression system. Mr. Scott stated that before a decision was made that the Council allow him to do some additional research.

Eva Ennis Pool

Town Manager Michael Scott explained to the Council that \$10,000 proposed in the budget for the demolition of the pool and addition of a green space originated from a discussion with Councilman Lee. Mr. Scott explained that he perceived what was really needed for the east side was a recreation center that could be opened year around and if joined with the Community Policing Office, it would be a win win situation. Mr. Scott explained that \$50,000 for the Police substation would be encumbered and \$27,000 for the Family Life Center would also be encumbered making a total of \$77,000 for the combined usage.

Mayor Moore directed the Manager to hold an informal meeting in the community outlining the proposed project.

Councilman Scott made a motion, seconded by Councilman Lee, to encumber the \$77,000 and place those funds in a capital reserve fund for the recreation center/police substation in East Smithfield with

the understanding that the pool would be demolished and a green space would be constructed. Unanimously approved.

Councilman Wood suggested that a shuttle be utilized to take children in all districts to the SRAC in the summer. Councilman Lee responded that kids from East Smithfield do not want to go to or cannot afford to go to the SRAC.

Mosquitos

Town Manager Michael Scott informed the Council that citizens are concerned about the mosquitos. The Town stopped spraying several years ago and the estimated cost to fix the equipment is about \$6,000 and another \$15,000 for chemicals and about \$12,000 for overtime. Contracting it out for a summer is about \$48,000.

Mr. Freeman stated that if the Town was going to provide this service it should not contract it out. It should be done in house.

Other related Business

Councilman Scott stated he would like the salaries from the general fund that are allocated a third to the water and sewer and a third to the electric fund to be itemized.

Additional Firefighters

Councilman Scott asked for discussion concerning funding three firefighter positions. He explained that he was concerned because of the upcoming ISO inspection. The Council has discussed grant funding for these three positions, but the reality is that Smithfield Fire Department is busier than Goldsboro.

Town Manager Michael Scott stated that according to information obtained from Chief Blanton three firefighters and equipment would cost approximately \$175,000. Mr. Scott stated salaries and benefits for six firefighters would be \$314,723, \$12,000 for materials, supplies and training, \$1500 for fuel and \$ 21,000 for uniforms and gear totaling \$349,223.

Mayor Pro-Tem Ashley stated that it was his recollection the recommendation was to seek the grant funding for the three positions. Councilman Scott responded those positions need to be funded as soon as possible.

Mayor Moore questioned how the town would fund the positions. Finance Director Greg Siler responded they could be funded through the use of fund balance, asset transfer from the Electric Fund in the amount of \$175,000 to the general fund, eliminate a large capital project like the trash truck, or increase property tax.

Mayor Moore stated the Council has been very clear about not transferring funds from the Electric fund to the general fund therefore if this is the will of the Council then they should consider increasing taxes because the only way to fund reoccurring expenses is to cut reoccurring expenses or raise the revenue source of the general fund which is taxes.

Councilman Harris stated the manager should have been informed of this prior to this meeting.

Mr. Scott stated in the meeting where the Fire Department was discussed, he did not hear this was something that you definitely wanted to do. His recommendation was to seek the grant funding because adding the positions now would not help us with the ISO inspection. Mr. Scott informed the Council that he had reviewed the last ISO Inspection from 2008 and a lot of their recommendation was based on projected growth which we haven't done. Mr. Scott thought it best to have the grant fund those positions for 2 years.

Mayor Moore again questioned how the Town would fund the position since it was clear that none of the Council wanted to raise taxes.

Suggestions for funding the positions included eliminating the 2% pay increase for all employees, eliminating the \$200 for the Finance Departments software, dividing up the cost between all the departments, eliminating volunteer firefighter supplements, a percentage of adjustments from every department.

Councilman Scott made a motion, seconded by Councilman Lee to direct the Finance Manager and Department Heads and Manager to add 1 firefighter per shift for a total of 3 full time to the budget as soon as possible and still seek the grant funds for the other 3 and find the money to fund the three positions in the general fund. Councilman Scott, Councilman Lee, Councilman Rabil and Councilman Wood voted in favor of the motion Mayor pro-Tem Ashley and Councilman Harris voted against it. Motion passed 4-2.

Adjourn

Councilman Scott made a motion, seconded by Councilman Harris adjourn at approximately 9:25 pm.

M. Andy Moore, Mayor

ATTEST:

Shannan L. Williams, Town Clerk