

**TOWN OF HILDEBRAN
TOWN HALL
MEETING ROOM**

**MAY 11, 2015
6:00 P.M.**

**RECESSED SPECIAL MEETING
BUDGET WORKSHOP
MINUTES**

- CALL TO ORDER** Mayor Cook reconvened the recessed special meeting/budget workshop at 6:00 p.m.
- COUNCIL PRESENT** The following members of the Board were present: Mayor Virginia Cook, Council Members Brenda Banks, Wendell Hildebrand, Jamie Hollowell and Barbara Lowman. Council Member Lee Lowman arrived at 6:03 p.m.
- STAFF PRESENT** The following staff members were present: Attorney Redmond Dill, Town Clerk Alice Sanders, Finance Officer Fredrick Rankins, Administrative Assistant Rebecah Isenhour and Office Assistant Greta McKinney.
- CITIZENS PRESENT** See attached list.
- MEDIA** No media attended the meeting.
- ADOPTION OF AGENDA** Council Member Banks made a motion to adopt the agenda. All voted in favor.
- ORDER OF BUSINESS BUDGET WORKSHOP**
- Mr. Rankins reviewed the changes made to the budget worksheet since the worksheet was distributed in the agenda packet.
- Page one included increases to the current year for: Ad Valorem Taxes; Sales Tax Article 40; Sales Tax Article 42; Hold Harmless Article; One Cent Sales Tax; and Alcohol/Beverage Tax.
 - Page three included reductions in: Overtime; Phone Service; and Payroll Taxes and Retirement. Increases included: Professional Services (due to legal expenses for Shook Builders and HHDA); Copier Expense; Office Supplies; and Dues & Subscriptions.
 - Page four included an increase to Building & Grounds and Festivals/Cruise Ins.
 - Page five included an increase in Park Utilities.
- Mr. Rankins confirmed the proposed budget is balanced with the same tax rate as previous years.
- Council reviewed pricing for Town banners and requested samples of canvas and vinyl to compare. Council Member B. Lowman requested a banner at each Town limit entry point and some throughout the Town. Council Member Hollowell asked for more samples and pricing from vendors that other towns have used, including Valdese and Granite Falls.
- Council Member L. Lowman asked for Ms. Isenhour to determine the fee for pole attachments from Duke Energy.

Council Member B. Lowman requested Ms. Isenhour to determine fees from Duke Energy, samples of an actual full-size banner in both vinyl and canvas, and to speak to Valdese to determine the type and longevity of their banners.

Council Member L. Lowman did not want to add any funds to the budget for banners. Council Members Banks, Hildebrand, Hollowell and B. Lowman requested \$5,000.00 to be added to the budget for FY 2015-2016.

Burke County REACT requested \$2,500.00 in exchange for assistance with road closures for Town events. Mayor Cook suggested that Council approve \$2,000.00. In a separate request, REACT requested \$2,150.00 in exchange for road closures for the cruise ins and festival. Mayor Cook suggested \$100.00 per event, which would be a total of \$900.00. Mayor Cook confirmed that the same number of workers will be at the cruise ins as prior years according to REACT. Council Member Hollowell suggested \$150.00 per event and Council was in agreement.

Ms. Sanders explained that Western Piedmont Community College has applied for a Golden Leaf Grant in the amount of \$1.3 million to help expand the mechatronics program to meet the needs of local industries. Bryan Steen, Burke County Manager, has requested support from all County municipalities in funding the local match, which should be approximately \$433,000.00, which may be able to be paid over two budget years. Attorney Dill suggested to wait and review the participation of other municipalities, how the money will be allocated and for what purpose. Council was in agreement.

Mayor Cook reviewed a request from the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics North Carolina in the amount of \$1,000.00. She reported that the Town has allocated funds for this purpose over the past two years. Mr. Rankins explained that funds left over from the deputy line item will be used, if approved. Council requested that this allocation not be taken out of the deputy's line item and be placed as its own line item under special appropriations. Council was in agreement to allocate \$500.00 for this budget year and \$500.00 for FY 2015-2016.

Ms. Sanders reported that the Town received a funding request from the Deaf Seniors of America for its annual conference and a request to advertise in its program book. No action was taken.

Mayor Cook reviewed the funding request from the Burke County Library for \$4,000.00 in order to purchase additional materials for users of the C. B. Hildebrand Library. Council Member Hollowell requested to know where the money is being spent. Council was in agreement to allocate \$4,000.00.

Council reviewed a budget amendment for FY 2014-2015 for cruise ins. After adjustments, Council Member Hollowell made a motion to approve the budget amendment for cruise ins in the amount of \$5,350.00. All voted in favor. The budget amendment is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Attachment A.)

Ms. Sanders reviewed a proposed Public Comment Policy in accordance with N.C. General Statute 160A-81.1. She explained that the Board had concerns about sections two and three limiting citizens' right to speak. She explained that those sections are verbatim from the statute and it would be up to the Board to evoke that right. Attorney Dill stated that he suggested the Board leave the statutory requirements in the policy and how to implement the policy will be up to the Board. The Board will vote on the approval at the next regular meeting.

Mayor Cook explained that the previous Mayor had approved two, long-term contracts that were not in accordance with previous timeframes and which had not been approved by the Board. She asked Attorney Dill if the Board could adopt a policy to limit anyone from signing contracts/leases without board approval. Mr. Dill confirmed that the Board could set its own policy. After discussion, it was decided that any expenditure or contract over \$1,000.00 must be approved by the Board and must be signed by the Mayor and the Mayor Pro Tem or another Council member. The policy will be updated and submitted for approval at the regular meeting.

Ms. Sanders reviewed the proposed agreement between the Town and Icard Township Water Corporation for sewer billing and collections. The initial quote from Icard Water's vendor for software enhancements was \$500 but was later increased to \$900. Ms. Sanders recommended changes to the proposed agreement to include Icard Water collecting sewer deposits and completing the sewer contract and then forwarding the money and contract to the Town on a monthly basis. A second suggested change is for Icard Water to include in its monthly reporting all the data that is needed for the Finance Officer to submit monthly and yearly reports. The last change will be in the Terms section concerning the six month review. It was suggested to add the word "fees" to the review.

Mayor Cook suggested that Attorney Dill send a letter to delinquent customers for collection for a \$100 fee to be added to the account. It was the consensus of Council for Office Assistant McKinney to begin calling delinquent accounts.

Ms. Sanders will contact Icard Water with the changes to the agreement.

Ms. Sanders asked Mayor Cook about a revision to the Utilities & Billing Department Policy & Procedures to include an increase to the sewer deposit to \$75.00 and she instructed Ms. Sanders to revise the policy and bring before the Board for approval at the next regular meeting.

Ms. Sanders addressed Council concerning delinquent customers who responded to the initial collections letter by setting up installment payments, but then missed the first installment payment. She pointed out that the policy doesn't address staff action when this occurs. It was the consensus of Council to allow customers who default on the installment agreement 10 days to pay the balance in full or the tap will be plugged. Ms. Sanders will also make this revision to the policy for Board approval.

Ms. Isenhour reported that there is a sink hole in the back of the property near the building that the County uses, at the fence line. Ronnie Franklin was contacted to investigate the area and an abandoned oil tank that belonged to the school was found. It was discovered that a pipe had burst and there was no place for the water to exit. Mr. Franklin is familiar with the Town's sewer lines and he provided a quote in the amount of \$6,396.19. Council will approve the quote and budget amendment at the regular meeting.

Mayor Cook called for a two minute recess at 7:57 p.m. Mayor Cook reconvened the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Council Member B. Lowman made a motion to recess into closed session at 7:59 p.m. pursuant to General Statute 143-318.11 (a) (6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. All voted in favor.

Council Member Hollowell made a motion to return to open session at 8:47 p.m. All voted in favor.

Council Member Hollowell addressed debris left in the Methodist Church parking lot next to the auditorium due to people parking in the church lot when using the auditorium.

Council Member B. Lowman made a motion to recess the special meeting until May 18, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. All voted in favor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT I attest these are the approved minutes of the Board.

Alice Sanders, Town Clerk

Virginia Cook, Mayor