Town of Clintwood

Recessed Town Council Meeting

Budget Workshop

May 25, 2023

6:00 p.m.

Record of Attendance

Council Members: Present:

Danny Lambert – Mayor Judy Steele-Clerk

Ron Kendrick – Vice Mayor Absent: Susan Wood -Attorney

Doris Rife

Talbert Bolling

Jim Childress

Shelly Mullins

Citizens – None

Mayor Lambert called the recessed meeting to order for a budget workshop on the

2023-2024 proposed budget.

Judy Steele, clerk, went over the Current and the Proposed items in the budget. She started with the General Fund Revenue. The cigarette stamp tax showed a decrease in revenue this year with the meals tax and lodging tax showing an increase revenue. The other tax revenues has remained about the same. The police department received several grants during the past year which they used to purchase equipment and supplies for their office and a recruitment grant. They receive two annual grants -DCJS 599 and DMV grant which they will receive again in FY23-24. A new grant will be DCJS ARPA for $110,000 which they will use to purchase a new vehicle and radio system.

The town has received a couple of grants which includes a DCR Grant to do the stormwater study, a Columbus Phipps Grant, and a Virginia Commission of the Arts grant. Grants and a contribution from the county have been received to develop new outdoor activities at the old football field which presently includes a Splash Pad, picnic area, and update to the bathrooms. The Tourism Grant is still available. The town sold the football bleachers.

Councilman Kendrick asked what the cemetery revenue consist of, and Judy said this was from the sale of the cemetery plots. Mayor Lambert said The Lane Group had started the smoke testing on the sewer system and should have their report done by June 30.

General Fund Expenses –

Police Department-The police department has had damage to three of the vehicles this year. Other expenses are their office expenses, vehicle expenses and upgrades to their computer

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**General Fund Expenses** –

system. They have requested in the new budget five thousand dollars ($5,000) for new body and car cameras.

Street Department - The DCR Grant will be used to do a Stormwater Study by Lane Engineering. The grant amount is Fifty-one thousand Three Hundred dollars (51,300) and the town’s match is Five Thousand Seven Hundred Dollars ($5,700).

Sanitation Department- There was a new fence put at the dumpster site on Factory Drive for a cost of $2,200.

Fire Department - The fire department has ordered two sets of turnout gear but has only received a small amount of what has been ordered. Funds have been included in the upcoming budget for them to purchase two more sets. The annual funds given to them each year has been increased from the current amount of $16,500 to $20,000. The council agreed to this increase.

Little League - The town pays the electric bill for the little league.

Ralph Cummins Stadium – The fieldhouse has been leased to the Historical Society and they have been making improvements to the building before moving into building. Councilman Bolling asked about taking the transformers down and cleaning that up and Mayor Lambert said that he wasn’t sure if AEP would take them down. He said he would check with someone with AEP. Councilman Mullins said he would check with someone also.

The main expense in the office this year has been upgrading the computer system to be ready for the software upgrade with Southern Software for the utility billing. In the coming year, additional funds were included in the audit expense in case we will be a single audit for 2023-2024. Mayor Lambert said that him and Judy had met with Tamara Greear with RodeferMoss about the pre-audit and starting to do additional work during the year to prepare the pre-audit which they will invoice the town for on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Parks - Supervisor Rhonda Sluss has purchased a Generation Swing for the Kids Korner Park and she would like to purchase an additional swing that would accommodate a wheelchair. We are checking to see if an additional swing will fit.

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Ralph Stanley Museum - Two heat pumps needed to be replaced at the museum and will go back with gas units for heat. The exterior of the museum will need considerable repairs. The Lodging is being rented out and we will need to have the lodging vacant for a period of time until the repairs can be made. Councilman Childress thought the cost to make the repairs will be $100,000-$150,000. Mayor Lambert said he would try to find some grant money to help with the repairs.

Cemetery - Will Lester does the mapping and surveying of the cemetery. Councilman Bolling suggested the town doing the opening and closing of the plots. Mayor Lambert said he has spoken to the men that works for the town and they did not think they could handle that with their other work. Now the men that open and close the plots are doing more for the funeral homes such as sitting up tents, chairs, sowing grass, and putting down straw. Councilman Childress said additional land is needed for plots in the cemetery. Mayor Lambert said he hopes some more property might possibly be gifted to the town. Councilman Kendrick said if the town does not uncover the plots, then the town needs to have more oversite of what is being done. Mayor Lambert said he does not know how they mess up because he has watched how Will paints the area for the plot to be uncovered.

Debit Retirement and Capital Outlay - The debt in the general fund is for the garbage truck and Capital Outlay is for the improvements at the old football field for outdoor activities which

includes the Splash Pad.

An agreement has been signed with DOC-Camp 18 for inmates to come back to Clintwood to help with the mowing and weed eating this year.

After reviewing the proposed General Fund Revenue and Expenses, the council discussed ways to increase the revenue because the expenses were estimated to be more than revenue.

Mayor Lambert said that RodeferMoss had done a rate analysis on the water and

sewer revenue and expenses to see what percentage those rates need to be to keep up with the expenses. He went over the percentages and the loss per customer with the current rates. Discussion was held concerning raising the base rate on the water rate and sewer rate and raising the rate on the per thousand after the first 2,000 gallons. The town is seeing an increase in the rate from John Flannagan Water Authority of eight cents and already twelve per cent from Veolia Water this year and the electric bills have increased in the past months. In the recent years, when John Flannagan Water and Veolia Water raised their rates, the town did not increase the customer’s rates.

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After much discussion, the following was the increase to the rates for the General Fund, Water Fund, and Sewer Fund for FY23-24 with an increase to the part time wages to $14 and full time between 12-15%.

**General Fund** – Meals Tax to 7% Cigarette Tax – to 15 cents

 Lodging Tax to 7% Real Estate Tax to 15 cents

 Real Estate Tax – 15 cents

 Use of Jettie Baker Center - $700

Residential Garbage – increase to $10

**Water Fund** - Residential Base Rate increase by $5 and $1 on the per thousand over

 2000 Gallons.

**Sewer Fund** - Residential Base Rate increase by $3 and $1 on the per thousand over 2,000

 Gallons

Motion was made by Councilman Mullins and second by Councilwoman Rife to advertise the budget once the Mayor and Clerk has it in balance. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Bolling and second by Councilman Childress to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.

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 Danny Lambert, Mayor

Attest:

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Judy Steele, Clerk