

Budget Meeting
October 27, 2021
6:30 p.m.

Present: Nick Smith, Mary Ellen DeBenedictis, William Carrow, Jonathan Burnett, Sean Valentine, Town Foreman Jeff Hurlock, Chief Carl Hutson, and Recording Secretary Sue Muncey were in attendance.

Mr. Valentine brought the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and vote on the 2022 budget and discuss and vote on a donation to the Little League.

Mr. Smith stated there is no media replacement cost in the budget. Do we need to add? Mr. Hurlock stated he can. If we don't figure out the issue, we will need to replace the media again. Our engineers are to reviewing it. It went to 6 milliliters per billion. Mr. Smith stated at 11 we are non-compliant. The estimated cost is \$120,000 to replace. Depending on what happens with the water, we might need to replace twice. Mr. Valentine asked do we want to add this to the budget. Mr. Smith stated yes add to the budget. Mr. Valentine asked do we want to add \$240,000. Mr. Smith stated to add \$120,000.

Mr. Valentine asked if anyone had questions on page 1. Mr. Smith stated late charges for water is listed at \$30,000. As of this date, we have collected \$43,000. This should be changed to \$40,000.

Mr. Valentine asked if anyone had questions on page 2. Mr. Smith asked for Mr. Hutson to email him the SRO payments.

Mr. Valentine asked if anyone had questions on page 3. Mr. Smith asked Mr. Hurlock if Ms. Knight was moved to Public Works Salary 781-100. Mr. Hurlock stated yes. Mr. Burnett had a question about Retired Health Expense 608-120. Mr. Smith stated we are behind. Mr. Smith stated the liability is \$450,000. Mr. Smith stated he is going to look into if the water acquisition is made. Mr. Burnett asked about Building Fuel Expense 612-180. Mrs. Muncey stated this is for Town Hall and Public Works building. Mr. Burnett asked about the Admin Cell Phone 612-200. Mrs. Muncey stated the Town Manager was added.

Mr. Valentine asked if anyone had questions on page 4. Mr. Smith stated donations are listed at \$10,000. The Clayton Fire Company and Ambulance 64 were separated. Mr. Smith asked what the \$10,000 consisted of. Mrs. Muncey stated Lillian Smith Senior Center \$2,000; Boys & Girls Club \$2,000; July 4th Association \$3,000; and Clayton Historical Society \$2,000. Mr. Burnett asked is the Little League looking for a dollar amount. Mr. Smith stated they asked for help with the trash cost. Mr. Hurlock suggested giving a cash donation. Mr. Burnett suggested adding \$5,000 to Donations. This will leave a little left if something else comes up. Mr. Smith suggested changing the Donation line 618-120 to \$15,000 giving the Little League \$1,500. All of Council were in agreement.

Mr. Valentine asked if anyone had questions on page 5. Mr. Valentine brought up 761-120 Public Safety Salary. Mr. Hutson stated complaints are up. With the current trend, we will have 4,200 complaints by 12/31/21. This is up. With new homes, there are more people. Mr. Hutson stated complaints are rising and the nature of the complaints are worse. We have had a murder, domestic shooting, and a child bring a live firearm into the middle school. We have nine (9) full-time officers. Two (2) are SRO's for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the

year. Four (4) officers cover the town in 12 hour shifts. At night one (1) person works. Smyrna PD helps if we need assistance. We don't want to be behind the curve. It is hard to find qualified people. Mr. Hutson stated he wanted Council to hear it from his point of view. Mr. Valentine asked about the COPS Grant. Mr. Hutson stated it opens in May. It is open for one (1) month. You get 75% for three (3) years of coverage. Mr. Hutson stated he plans to submit an application. He stated they have received in the past. He stated his intent was to find someone younger to hire. Mr. Smith stated the total cost would be \$85,000 with salary, pension, and health insurance. Mr. Hutson stated a Patrolman would be \$52 – 53,000. A seasoned Patrolman Firsts Class would be \$57,000. Mr. Smith asked if there was a cost for the academy. Mr. Hutson stated it is minimal – a couple \$1,000; uniforms would be \$1,000. Mr. Smith asked about a vehicle. Mr. Hutson stated we have two (2) extra vehicles – a Crown Vic and a Charger. Mr. Burnett asked Mr. Hutson what kind of vehicle did he order. Mr. Hutson stated a Ford. Mr. Valentine asked if weapons were in the budget. Mr. Hutson stated yes. Ms. DeBenedictis asked how many part-time officers there were. Mr. Hutson stated one. Mr. Smith stated he had a concern. Total expense for Public Safety is \$1.3 million. We have two (2) main sources of revenue – property tax and transfer tax. This does not cover the Public Safety expenses. Electric will not be able to keep up. Council needs to think of a long-term plan. Mr. Hutson stated Public Safety salaries is falling behind from other agencies. Mr. Smith asked what income will increase yearly to cover the expense. The transfer tax is an “assumed” income. Mr. Smith stated he is trying to wean away from depending on transfer taxes. It appears we have money because different departments do not spend what they anticipate to spend in expenses. Mr. Carrow asked about increasing Public Safety Tax. Mr. Smith stated if we increase to \$20 per year, you have \$36,000 which would cover a police vehicle. Ms. DeBenedictis stated Smyrna increased their customer service fee from \$13 to \$16. Mr. Smith stated assessments could make a difference. Mr. Valentine stated keep Public Safety Salary at \$708,762. Mr. Burnett asked about overtime. If you have another person will it go down? Mr. Hutson stated they haven't reached the number that are at now. Mr. Burnett stated to leave as is and we will see what happens with the water system. Mr. Carrow asked about the COPS Grant. Is it only for a new hire? Mr. Hutson stated yes. Mr. Smith stated to leave in with the intent to hire. Mr. Smith asked about Public Safety Fuel Expense 766-100. He is concerned with the cost going up. Mr. Hutson stated he has only used \$14,000 so far this year. Mr. Burnett stated maintenance will be up. Mr. Hutson stated it has increased.

Mr. Valentine moved to page 6. Mr. Valentine asked about IT Expense. Will an \$8,000 increase be enough? Mr. Burnett stated he tries to be frugal. Mr. Hutson stated that is only for Public Safety. It is for Lexipol, technology, and monitoring and maintenance of the cameras. Mr. Burnett asked about Public Works Overtime 781-110. Is it enough? Mr. Hurlock stated it was set at the budget meeting last month. Mr. Smith stated he is comfortable either way. Mr. Valentine suggests to move back to \$70,000. Mr. Carrow suggested leaving it at \$60,000. Mr. Burnett asked if salary re-evaluations were done. Mr. Hurlock stated no. Mr. Smith stated there is an increase for everyone in the department except the Town Foreman.

Mr. Valentine asked if anyone had questions on page 7. Mr. Burnett asked about 784-100 Contractor Snow Removal. Mr. Hurlock stated this is for salt and snow removal. Mr. Burnett asked about the Handheld Radio Expense. Mr. Hurlock stated it was okay. Mr. Valentine asked about 784-280 Christmas Decoration Expense. Ms. DeBenedictis asked if we could increase. Mr. Smith stated to leave it be. Mr. Hurlock asked about Park Expense 784-290. Shouldn't it have the irrigation expense? Mr. Carrow stated yes - add \$12,000. Mr. Smith asked what the \$5,000 was for. Mr. Hurlock stated maintenance of all the parks. Mr. Carrow stated this line items needs to be increased to \$17,000. Mr.

Hurlock stated he wanted to mention that trash increases 3% yearly. This will be passed on to the customer.

Mr. Smith asked if anyone had any questions on page 8. Mr. Valentine asked about Electric Repair 786-180. Are you okay at \$40,000? Mr. Hurlock stated it was at \$70,000. Mr. Smith stated change it to \$55,000. Mr. Smith asked about Artesian Water Expense 787-100. It wasn't adjusted. Mr. Smith stated put it at \$100,000. Mr. Valentine asked about Water Meter Purchase. Mr. Smith stated leave it the same. Mr. Smith stated Arsenic Well Expense 787-370 needs to increase \$120,000 for the media. Mr. Burnett asked about Lift Station Expense 788-110. It is lower. Mr. Hurlock stated he is anticipating using ARPA funds. Mr. Hurlock stated there is no number in ARPA Engineering 788-210. Mr. Smith stated to add \$60,000.

Mr. Valentine asked if anyone had any other questions.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the proposed 2022 budget with changes made. The sum of the deficit will be reported back to Council. Mr. Burnett seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Valentine adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Recording Secretary,

Sue Muncey