

**TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS – BUDGET WORK SESSION
JANUARY 19, 2018 AT 10:00 A.M.
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN ROOM**

Present: Mayor J. Alan Peoples

Commissioners: Crys Armbrust, Bill Crowell, Chrelle Booker Absent: Bill Ingham

Staff Present: Town Manager Zach Ollis Town Clerk Susan Bell
Police Chief Jeff Arrowood

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order and turned over to the town manager.

Town Manager Ollis went over the revenues received in FY 17-18. He didn't budget anything from Other Revenue down to Police Court Fees so anything received is a gain for us. The Fire District looks good. His main concern was the water charges. They are not as good as he thought. Our water loss is a lot higher than it should be. The meter fee was not being spent the way it should be. We have corrected this. The meters have been estimated and he feels that they are being estimated low. Tommy is strategically hand reading certain meters to make sure they are correct. We made the investment on White Oak to get a new type meter that will count water by the ounce. We are looking at hand reading meters at least once every three months to make sure the readings are correct.

Most of the revenues are running correctly. The sanitation revenues are a little lower. This may have to do with the timing of the billing and with the posting of payments. Mayor Peoples stated we had talked about adding a quarter for the next four years. Ollis stated that has been included. We also had \$903 in donation for the Citizen of the Year Award for Mr. Payne and Mr. Jackson. They have requested a rose garden be installed at the Roseland Center.

Expenditures:

Ollis stated we have cut back on expenditures from last year and are doing well. We are working under a different mindset. This has helped tremendously.

Armbrust asked about 10-00-4110-399. Ollis explained that we have to pay the county for elections in our town. In the street department a few line items are over, but we have savings in the other line items. Harmon Field is looking pretty good. The Tourism seems okay. In Water & Distribution, he would like to point out some of the savings. The guys have done a pretty good job of not spending. In supplies & materials we budgeted \$60,000 and we have \$48,000 left at this point. Basically everything is going well.

Armbrust asked how the fire department is repaying the town and where we see that. Ollis stated under 20-10-4340-483 labeled inter-fund transfer you see \$32,000. This will be pulled out over four or five years. Just above that is \$45,000 which is for admin services that are used on the fire department. The year before, that charge was not included. Chief Tennant was told his budget will be down \$77,000 because of these charges.

Ollis stated everything seems to be doing well in water & sewer. Mayor Peoples asked if we have any idea of what can be put into fund balance. Ollis stated general fund looks at putting back \$40,000.

Sanitation had a full time worker leave and we decided to go with a part time worker. Hopefully this will help with some savings this year.

With what we went through last year and over the past few years, we've done well.

Armbrust asked if personnel could be discussed. Ollis stated yes, but he was going to go over plans that we have to budget for.

Ollis asked what projects the board would like to see happen. One that we need to focus on is the raw water line on Country Club - best estimate \$500,000. He has talked with USDA, Division of Water Resources and Surcap, which have all been here to see the project. He applied for a search grant and was denied because of MHI. The medium household income is much higher. He looked at the general area of Country Club and that area is still above the threshold. He could look at USDA funding. This project will only effect twelve homes and only nine of the homes are lived in. Crowell stated they don't pay for water. Ollis stated correct.

Armbrust stated this project was engineered years ago (50 years ago). Not sure why it was not done back then. Ollis stated they laid the line to feed the water plant. According to citizens they claim to get the easement, they were told they could use the water for gardening purposes. The citizens feel the water is safer than the town's filtered water. Crowell asked if it was a separate pipe. Ollis stated it comes straight from the lake and heads to the water plant. Crowell suggested installing a small pump station. Ollis stated the last one he did cost half a million dollars for sewer. Going up, the filtered water stops at the house right past the Country Club. There is no water source up there. Wells can't be dug. They have tried and come up dry. He's not sure why they were granted a permit to build. USDA has low interest rate loans. The Department of Water Resources have been on us since 2012. They have dropped the ball and so have we. Now they want it fixed.

Crowell asked about the Hogback tower. Ollis stated we pump to that also. He feels the cost could go a lot over the \$500,000.

Ollis stated he has been approached by Joe Piccone, who has purchased Tryon Mountain Hardware and the house beside it. He has requested to hook up to sewer. This will cost over a half of a million dollars. We will have to cross the river in two places and possible pump stations added. Crowell stated you will have more people to sign up for this service.

Ollis asked if there were any other projects that the board wanted him to research. Crowell stated sidewalk repairs and crosswalks across the railroad tracks. Armbrust stated the Norfolk Southern engineer told him to never ask permission of this. Booker asked about Cleveland and Carson Street. These are terrible roads. Cleveland is probably a bigger problem than Carson. Ollis stated Cleveland is on our list, but engineers have looked at Cleveland and to widen the road it would be very costly. Hogback has issues coming down the mountain and Carson is really bad. Chestnut needs to be paved. We need to come up with a figure and see how much council wants to spend.

Tryon offers more services than most towns our size. He asked if there was anything else the board wanted to discuss.

Armbrust stated we do need a public works director. Crowell agreed, but he needs to have boots on. Mayor Peoples asked for another appraisal on the Community Center at Harmon Field. He also wants to check on an elevator for Town Hall and made the suggestion to talk to Randy Mitchell. He also made the suggestion again to round up your water payment to the next dollar to help raise funds for projects.

Armbrust asked if we could contact Duke Energy to see if there are funds available to consolidate all the spaghetti wiring on Palmer Street. Crowell asked how we are going to start repairing our street lights. Ollis stated that will come up when we get further into budget. Stephen Brady has given him a contact. Adrian can repair some of the lights, but he can't do everything. He can turn the lights sideways to keep off the street, but it wouldn't look as nice. Landrum has smaller light poles that are easier to manage. Crowell suggested checking with Duke Energy.

Ollis stated the next meeting will be February 5th at 4:00.

Armbrust asked about Tim Wright. Chief Arrowood stated if elected the position would not change until November. Crowell asked about retirees coming up. Chief Arrowood stated Theda is retiring April 30th. Crowell asked if there were any other employees. Ollis stated no.

Armbrust asked to continue the water authority discussions. Ollis asked who the contact for this. Mayor Peoples stated we were holding the meetings in Columbus. He also has been suggesting a WASA authority.

Commissioner Ingham came in.

Armbrust asked if we raised taxes, what percentile we are willing to go up to. Mayor Peoples asked how much our property was last year. We may need about three cents to make about \$40,000. Ollis stated he could get together some comparisons. Mayor Peoples asked if we could designate projects for the additional tax to go to. Ollis state yes.

Armbrust asked about the five year plan and the comprehensive plan. Mayor Peoples stated we need a short term and a long term plan. It needs to be updated.

ADJOURN

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Ingham so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

J. Alan Peoples, Mayor

Attest:

Susan B. Bell, Town Clerk