

**TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION
MARCH 20, 2018 6:00 P.M.
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN ROOM**

Present: Mayor J. Alan Peoples came in at 6:15 Mayor Pro Tem Bill Ingham
Commissioners: Crys Armbrust & Bill Crowell came in at 6:10, Chrelle Booker
Staff Present: Town Manager Zach Ollis Town Clerk Susan Bell

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Ingham called the work session to order at 6:12 p.m. and turned over to the town manager.

Town Manager Ollis started with agenda items for the regular meeting. We have a Proclamation for Child Prevention Month to be presented and a presentation from Carol Browning about the Carolina Foothills. Last month you asked if the properties we were looking at could be put on a map. He got this from the county gis department. The board discussed the property locations. The property that is closest to the cemetery the board would like to keep. The back taxes and attorney fees is all that we would have to pay. These properties are the ones to purchase if they ever come off of that list. The board is interested in T7-A46 and T7-A47 next to cemetery and the one next to the property that the town already owns. Armbrust asked for clarification if the board didn't approve this in the last meeting. Ollis stated you wanted to look at the maps. Armbrust stated that we authorized that at the last meeting, he thought. Town Clerk Bell stated that you asked to pull the W.S. Green one and then it was decided to table everything until the next meeting because you wanted to see the map.

Ollis stated that Habitat is interested in purchasing T1-D10 off of Shepherd Street. There is a note on two of the properties that a taxpayer is interested in purchasing both T5-J6 and T5-J7.

Ollis stated that Huckleberry's wants to secure the Depot Plaza, but would have to reserve the restrooms through Parsec Financial. Armbrust stated he would suspect if you asked Michael that he would probably allow it. Christine Cowles stated that according to her e-mail they were going to approach him. There are only eight restrooms indoors right now and two porta-potties. They may have to obtain more porta-potties.

Ollis asked if there were any more questions on either of these items. There were none.

The next thing on the agenda is the Polk County TDA. You have the inter-local agreement and by-laws in the packet. He presented the green sheets which show Polk County TDA revenues and expenditures. He spoke with Marche again today. There were questions regarding special and current meetings. The board will be notified forty-eight hours before the special meeting.

Mayor Peoples asked what control the county TDA has over our money. Ollis stated there is a statement in the bylaws that may clear up some of this. Armbrust stated the percentage is not in the document. Crowell stated he thought we were getting five out of the six percent collected. Armbrust stated they

have a five member board. Ingham stated we are Polk County also and the members should be representing us also. Peoples asked if six percent is collected, we get five, does the county have any control. Ollis stated all the money goes into separate pots, the board looks over the request and the request has to be permissible under legislation. The state created the bylaws. Armbrust stated they used a general template that can be tweaked. He would like to understand page 3 of the Polk County TDA budget which shows \$174,000. What percent is Tryon responsible for? Crowell stated one percent goes to the county for administration/payroll. Armbrust would like to see that in writing. Mayor Peoples stated he doesn't want to see the state take any of our money and he doesn't feel the county would do that. The way we read something sometimes is left to interpretation.

Ollis read item 8 of the inter-local agreement, which states:

83.33% of all revenue collected from within the boundaries of each participating municipality shall be placed in a special travel and tourism development grant fund for each municipality. All funds accrued within a participating municipality's grant fund shall be used to fund grant applications only from the participating municipality. Grant funds shall be available for those projects the participating municipality has determined will promote travel and tourism and for tourism-related expenditures, as allowed. Funding for municipal grant applications shall not be unreasonably withheld provided they have been shown to be utilized for permissible purposes, in those amounts and percentages allowable per North Carolina General Statutes, and there are sufficient funds available in the participating municipality's grant fund.

He stated the way he reads it is the five cents goes into a fund that only Tryon can apply for and it says shall not be unreasonably held. Armbrust stated based on what you have just read, the highest percentage the county will be able to assess us is 11.2%. Crowell stated annually. Ollis stated yes. The large pot of money going to the county, we can apply for those grants as well. Crowell stated the county raises, for example \$300,000, they are going to open up that money to TIEC or the Boy Scouts can apply for it. Ollis stated they are going to use it for tourism uses and allow it for other situations. For example, if Our Carolina Foothills wanted to apply for something through them, they could. It doesn't guarantee they will be funded, but the possibility is there. Crowell asked if funds could be pulled for events held in the municipality. He would like to see the money used to put heads in beds.

Ingham asked what the advantages are to us. Ollis stated we are getting an extra two cents, but we do lose a little bit of control. At the same time we are not responsible for the tax collections. Ingham asked if it was difficult to get out of this. Ollis stated basically we have to rescind our Authority to opt into this one. He will have Mr. Morgan speak on this in the regular meeting. Mayor Peoples asked when the county wants this done. Ollis stated as soon as possible. Saluda has already signed on and they are waiting on Tryon. Crowell stated he is okay with this as long as Mr. Morgan doesn't see anything.

Ollis stated next will be the Finance Policy that was approved in August on second reading. Crowell asked when the next budget meeting was. Ollis stated you have two more with the next one on Monday, March 26 at 9:00 a.m. Could we not wait and talk about this then? Armbrust asked why we are waiting. He asked the board to consider tweaking the thirty percent to twenty percent. Mayor Peoples stated it was set last year at thirty percent and the audit shows we are close to forty percent. Armbrust stated we tell our citizens every week that we don't have the money. Ingham agrees with what Crys is saying. The biggest issue that he gets is on leaf pickup. Ollis stated that will have to be set

up on a recurring cost. The savings is basically a one year savings and is going to happen one time. Armbrust stated maybe. That money will be omni present in our budget. He will not approve a tax increase with that much money in savings. Ingham agreed. Ollis stated the budget is being presented with no tax increase. Crowell likes the idea of having thirty percent in savings. What if we have an emergency? Our assets are crumbling. What if the Lake Lanier Dam has to have repairs overnight? Ollis stated the board can opt to go below the thirty percent threshold. Ingham stated that if the audit comes in with forty percent, there is no problem leaving it at thirty percent. Armbrust doesn't understand why we tie our hands behind our back.

Mayor Peoples stated we need a trash truck at a \$100,000 and a dump truck for \$50,000. Ingham stated we have sidewalks in the budget, but we need to look at things we need or things that need repaired. Peoples asked if we could not become our own bank and pay ourselves back. Armbrust stated his main concern is that the state will come in and access us and will take money right off the top. Peoples stated the state didn't come in and take the money out of our account, they just didn't give us the money.

ADJOURN

Mayor Peoples closed the work session and the board took a short break before the regular meeting.

J. Alan Peoples, Mayor

Attest:

Susan B. Bell, Town Clerk