

TOWN OF TRYON

WORK SESSION

May 19, 2020 6:00 P.M.

MCCOWN ROOM - TOWN HALL

Present: Mayor J. Alan Peoples

Commissioners: Crys Armbrust, Bill Ingham Mayor Pro Temp Chrelle Booker, Bill Crowell

Staff Present: Town Manager Zach Ollis

Town Clerk Susan Bell

Town Attorney William Morgan

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peoples called the work session to order.

Commissioner Ingham – Lease on the tower. Town Manager Ollis - They wanted to pay \$650. I called Mayor Peoples and we decided to bring it to the board. Mayor Peoples didn't want to go that low. Commissioner Crowell - will that help internet service around us? Town Manager Ollis - It won't help people who already have internet. You would have to sign up to get wireless internet.

Commissioner Armbrust how much do we charge now? Town Manager Ollis - \$700 and they were tied on to our tower. They are the reason are tower failed because they overloaded the tower. We built a new tower and they are not going back on our tower because of the way they handled it. George from Pure Country stated that he knows we have issues with Skyrunner, but he needs internet especially with COVID, so people can work from home. Town Manager Ollis - tried to pick up the pace with the tower.

Town Attorney Morgan – They offered \$300, we suggested \$800. Commissioner Armbrust - Original was \$700, but we wanted to ask for \$1,000. Commissioner Ingham – Can we get Skyrunner on our roof?

Town Manager Ollis – I don't know if it will go that far. Town Attorney Morgan – Don Davis pointed out that they were paying \$700 to be attached to towns existing tower. Town Attorney Morgan - 60 day notice every five years they would have an opportunity and the town would have an opportunity to get out of the lease. The tower can be leased for 25 years. Commissioner Armbrust - At the very least the lease will be for five years and sublet space on the tower and we would not have control over that.

Commissioner Crowell – Find out if we can get Skyrunner. Charge \$700, we get free Skyrunner for town hall. Commissioner Armbrust – How much is internet package? Commissioner Crowell – I think \$48.

Commissioner Armbrust- Ask for at least \$800. Mayor Peoples - Ask for \$1000. Town Attorney Morgan – Meet in the range of \$350 - \$800. Commissioner Armbrust - They always have the option of going somewhere else. Town Manager Ollis - We would love free internet, but we need to keep the existing internet for the equipment at the Police Department. Town Attorney Morgan – Does the Town have a deal with Pangaea? I need to see that. Town Manager Ollis – We may have something.

Town Attorney Morgan – Want me to go back with \$800 and an internet connection for town hall. BOC – Yes. Town Attorney Morgan - Every five years give us an opportunity to reevaluate the lease.
Commissioner Crowell - How long will it take for the tower to go up if the lease is signed this week?
Town Attorney Morgan – Probably a month. Commissioner Ingham - How much land do we own? Town Manager Ollis - 1.1 acres. They want 10 x10 and I said 20 x 20 is best if anything goes wrong. Mayor Peoples – \$800 and free internet.

Commissioner Armbrust – Is Harmon Field Blue Ridge under contract? Town Manager Ollis – It has come back and I will send the information. Commissioner Armbrust – Harmon Field is a gem, yet I recognize that it is our least monetized holding and I think we should step up to the plate and work on that. Someone approached him offering to do a charity to benefit for a local charity. Town Manager Ollis – we put that in the contract. Commissioner Armbrust – Start thinking about the possibility for fall or spring implement camping in the log cabin. Make sense to follow the national park system protocol.
Commissioner Armbrust – The Town Manager has viable concerns about the bridge.

Commissioner Armbrust - Finalized a business in units one and two of 289 S. Trade St. I think we will probably sign something tomorrow or Friday. An expanded food operation.

Mayor Pro Tem Booker – Can you bring us up to speed on the guard rail and Lake Lanier? Town Manager Ollis - Quotes come in at low \$50,000. The cost is due to the fact that the guard rail will be installed over gas lines. This is hand digging and trenching and the cost of a DOT road. Lake Lanier three mudslides. Workers going out there and the fire fighters and police are checking on it throughout the night. Bill Crowell is taking on a plan to find how to pump the water out that will save us money. Commissioner Armbrust – Can you show them the video? Town Manager Ollis – showed the video of the mudslides.

Commissioner Ingham – The pothole on Jervey road. Town Manager Ollis - Jody is checking on the Jervey pothole. It is on the list. Daryl Price looked at it, but Jody thinks we should take care of it ourselves due to cost. Town Manager Ollis – The side of the road is the issue. Commissioner Ingham – Water is getting underneath and corroding. Town Manager Ollis – Where is the water coming from?
Commissioner Crowell – There is a beautiful waterfall. There is a lot of water coming over.

Town Manager Ollis – Different options for the budget that was discussed last time. Takes into considering COVID. It's difficult to determine where we will be with sales tax. Some people are cutting low at 8%, 20%, and 30%. Marsche at the County is projecting 12%. Lead with 12%. No adjusting property taxes. WNMA optimistic that western NC is living on a fixed income. It's not as volatile as the working household. Sales tax has dropped a little. Recognized Article 44. Lose about \$67,000. Powell Bill has not changed. No change with Fire Department. Lake Lanier getting \$68,000. Occupancy tax hard to determine because we don't know what is going to happen. Pulling from fund balance for TDDA. Water and sewer have not adjusted revenue. We are lower for this month. Hopefully we can get back to normal once people get back to work. Sanitation – nothing changed. This budget, due to COVID only putting about \$400 back into fund balance. Commissioner Armbrust - what percentile do we have approximately in reserve? Please confirm. It's important to understand for some stuff that will probably come up. Town Manager Ollis - Admin stays the same. The only thing that is changing is that Roger from

the water plant will retire in December and we need to find someone. We budgeted for a full year for a beginner to come in and half a year for Roger. Providing a third person for fire department to go 24-hours coverage with three shifts. Nothing changed to Harmon Field. Putting \$30,000 back. Tourism is helping pay salaries. Water sewer staying the same. Commissioner Armbrust - How much is our debt? Town Manager Ollis -Roughly \$333,000.

Mayor Peoples – Do we have our third quarter sales tax refund back from the state? Town Manager Ollis – I will ask Pam.

Town Manager Ollis – Another budget pulls \$100,000 from fund balance for projects. Projects for contract services the bridge, \$50,461 in other to get started on Lake Lanier. Commissioner Ingham – shouldn't that come out of the water plant budget. Town Manager Ollis – yes. Streets, sidewalks, boardwalk, bridge and COLA 1% for staff are included in this budget. Paying 1.6M after adjustment.

Commissioner Armbrust – I understand that we are facing a difficult situation. Our people are the back bone of our organization. Each one of them have stepped up to the plate. I think that we should demonstrate something for them and direct the Town Manager to create a 2% COLA raise. BOC – Agreed.

Town Manager Ollis – We are looking at a deficit if COVID continues. Commissioner Armbrust - We should use some of that access. I'm terrified that the state is going to do a state wide municipal assessment and we can't do anything about it. Mayors Peoples - Last time they took \$45,000. Town Manager Ollis – Next year is the revalue, so you will have to make a decision either way regarding taxes.

Town Manager Ollis will present the budget with 2% COLA for employees.

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