

approval. Peoples replied someone has donated a dishwasher for the cabin. Ollis stated yes, that is very nice.

The Occupancy taxes keep going up. Four years ago, we were lucky to clear \$27,000, now we are clearing \$35,000. Peoples replied there is one place in town that has out of state tags parked there routinely.

Crowell asked if we could add a fence going to the dog park. A lady driving, nearly took out a lady walking. Ollis replied we have put up a huge sign. He has looked into other ways of preventing vehicles on the track, but they are expensive.

The water/sewer looking like we may come out a little bit better this year. Last year we floated part of Pam and Jordan's salary. Pam is retiring and Jordan is taking over. We are looking at replacing Tommy, moved Adrian to streets (will be pulled off to do other things) for now. This gives us four in streets. May need to look at a vehicle, but for now, he is not looking at one. Going to try and make it work, splitting them up, two to a truck. Armbrust replied this will make them more efficient. Ollis replied a lot of our vehicles are in bad shape and we probably will need them before long, but for now we have other things to take care of in water/sewer.

We received word on Friday from Division of Water, Infrastructure. The loan (\$2.2 million dollar project), we are getting one million in forgiveness loan and \$1.2 million in the loan that we have to pay back. They are saying with ARPA funding coming in, they are going to take and transition it into a grant style program and so our loan will be eligible to switch over to a grant. Basically, if all goes well, we will get a \$2.2 million project for free. We will probably put the other money toward the clearwell on the mountain and fix that issue. Governor's budget is providing us with \$425,000. As far as the revenue stream the CIP will raise the rates. He is building the budget off of last year's revenues, so when the rates go up this year, it will go in the coffer for these projects. Crowell asked about the clearwell. Ollis replied it has had a crack in it for almost twenty years. One engineer has someone that can dive in and make repairs. Another engineer said he would build another one. The problem is when producing a lot of water quickly, we lose a water.

Interconnect line with Saluda and Columbus-Stephen Orr, the manager at Saluda has hired WithersRavenel to look at that project and they have to come to the conclusion that it will cost around \$1.5 million to make repairs, which is substantially more that the debt that is left. They will come and make a presentation to us so that we can ask for loan forgiveness. He will be here soon to make a presentation to us. That line was built because of the drought and the sense we need regional water. The need for water down east is an issue. Peoples explained the state was so convinced this was going to work. He went to Raleigh to make a one-hour presentation on what we have done and why we did it. Nothing the engineers said works. Ollis replied he has been here five years and sold water to Columbus twice, because Broad River Water couldn't supply them quick enough. Peoples explained it was talked about years ago, putting together a county-wide water authority, but nothing ever come of it.

Ollis reported the Sanitation rates for businesses are going up a couple of dollars a month. The residential rates are going up fifty cents a month. Peoples asked about the big bins. Ollis explained we have sixty-eight customers paying the \$56 rate, seven businesses paying the \$118 rate (mostly restaurants) and five that pay the \$187 rate (IGA). The businesses get more than one time a week. We run business route downtown every day. Some places they go by, check and if needed they will pick up

an additional day. Average residents will see an increase of six dollars a year. Crowell sees people throwing garbage into the container at IGA that have South Carolina license plates on them. Ollis responded Phillip is going to talk to Mr. Teaster. That is an issue we have. Contractors have been caught behind Missildine's. Crowell asked about the school trash. Ollis responded GFL picks up their garbage. On the expenditure side we have adjusted property liability. Those numbers have gone up.

The two things we are going to have to worry about is our property liability insurance and our health insurance rates, Susan met with the lady and they are thinking our rates will not increase.

We are looking at a revenue excess in GF of \$38,000. The fire loan has come off, along with the brush truck. Going to save this in preparation for the engine payment. We are trying to build a budget, that we can take to the county to ask for a tax increase. Harmon Field budget is \$852 in the hole, but he can figure that out. Tourism will be \$2200 to the good. Water/Sewer will be \$25 to the good. Sanitation will have \$200.

TDDA Director Henderson reported they have some turnovers on her board. She, Wanda and Zach went on Friday to meet with Sherry Adams, the Main Street Coordinator. They barely met the Main Street accreditation this year, due to some stuff that has happened with their board. With Sherry's recommendation, along with her and Wanda's they need to go through a budget work session similar to this and have Main Street to facilitate and hold organizational workshops for their work plan. Basically, her board has not gotten back with her on her draft work plans that she has put in front of them, except the Livability Committee, that has done some work. One item they wanted to complete was a railing project from White Oak to downtown for easy access for residents to walk up town to eat or shop. Bill Crowell went and walked with Nick Fisher to look at where we are proposing to install railing and the cost of materials. They have a meeting with White Oak next Tuesday and we would love to get this done in the spring. That's something, hopefully will be used for a hundred years. She wants her board to focus on things that have a lasting impact on downtown. They have looked at the livability score and our standards are pretty low. We have the most retired people living in Polk County. They have looked at projects that they could do relatively quickly and easily that would add easy access to our downtown. The railing will provide a simple way to get up to Main Street, where they may want to go to the movies. They have donated \$9,000 out of their budget to this project. They also applied for a Polk County Appearance Commission matching grant \$1,000. The total cost of the project will be about \$25,000. They are hoping to get \$5,000 from White Oak. She would like to apply to Polk County Community Foundation to see if they can get money from them. The short form applications are coming due pretty soon. She asked the Board of Commissioners to fund \$5,000 of the project. Armbrust replied she should pursue the Community Foundation, because there has been a huge change in leadership and he hopes a change in attitude.

Armbrust requested an unbiased, unpassionate assessment of the dynamics within the leadership of TDDA. Ollis reported the leadership has taken full-time jobs. Fact is, we do not have participation from the TDDA members at the meetings. Armbrust asked for it in writing. Henderson replied they have minutes. Armbrust replied you know the important stuff does not get in the minutes. Henderson replied Roger Walker does ours and he does a good job. He's very detail oriented. Armbrust replied he is asking for a fair and honest judgement such as you asking us for \$5,000. Ingham replied that is specific and we do need rails going up the hill. It is extremely dangerous. Peoples replied we have been discussing rails ever since Armbrust had been at TDDA. Crowell responded if you could get Greg to let us

attach to the building, that would save tons of money. Ollis will get you an unbiased, unpassionate assessment review of the TDDA board.

Henderson updated the board. Heidi has decided to resign. That's after being absent for the last year, if not more. We are working now to try and find out who is going to be Interim President. Heidi's term ends in June. Armbrust stated Kareen also. Henderson responded he came on as Treasurer. Gave high hopes to him becoming President, but he has been out of the country a lot. Both have missed enough meetings for dismissal without proper notification. Armbrust asked if she had checked Wanda's eligibility or does she have to stand down for three years. Ollis hasn't checked that yet. He will check the bylaws and give him an unbiased, unpassionate assessment. TDDA lost some real, heavy hitters when Scott, Gayle, Gordon, Dulci Yungler with all the time and effort these people put in, and then just walked away. We are seeing the ramifications now. This is a board that you can't just walk in, make a decision and just walk away. Paige is supposed to oversee a lot of this stuff and if there is no one there to oversee, what happens is, she calls Zach, Fire Department and Police Department and it ends up being the town staff doing stuff for events like Tryon Midnight. Town staff put together the Christmas ornaments. Ollis went to a meeting and they asked what he was going to do for Christmas, he told the board that he would purchase the lights, if TDDA would put them up. Ollis, Police Chief, Fire Department, Paige and Nick Fisher ended up putting up the lights.

Peoples responded this is happening everywhere. It's always someone else's job. Henderson replied she wanted to be fair about the railing proposal. That is coming from a committee that is working, having meetings, and reporting back at the board meetings. She wants to honor them for their commitment. That's the way it is supposed to be.

Henderson reported they did bring back the façade grant last year, which had gone away for a couple of years. They dedicated \$6,000 from their budget and they had four applicants. She would like to request \$6,000 from the Board of Commissioners so that she could do more. Any amount she would appreciate. They did up to \$2,000 matching grants. They have paid out about 60% of that. Ian Griggs who is doing the project on Pacolet got reimbursed for some windows. They went through the entire process with us, the historical design, everything. Mike Roeback is still working on his project and will get reimbursed. Bob Scruggs was actually approved for the small \$1,000 grant for some painting. The Upstairs was approved, but before they could get accomplished, there was a storm and they were flooded. They are still working on it. These grants are important for our board. She would like to ask for this amount.

Armbrust asked for the net on the Beerfrest. Henderson responded they made around \$12,500, which in previous years they made around \$8,000. It is still not as much money as they would have liked to make, considering they put up almost \$30,000. There are some things with that also, they are going to be working on. Armbrust responded you realize TDDA is not made to have money. Paige understands and can show you they don't have money. The money they have is for events like 4th Fridays, the strolls and the money earmarked for the rails and façade grants. She is just asking for a matching grant. Ingham responded it is worth \$5,000 to him to see rails. Armbrust asked for a copy of their budget. Henderson replied as soon as they do their budget.

Ollis reported the proposal from Trace & Company to do the sidewalks up Pacolet came in at, concrete only \$35,924, concrete with brick \$42,564 from clean edge in front of the distillery to the turn off that

you requested. Armbrust replied that is doubled. Ollis responded everything is extremely costly. When we know how much money we have, we can do some of these projects.

Armbrust asked where his money was for the boardwalk. Does he not have \$30,000 from the past two years. Ollis responded no. The way that he, budgets is he put \$10,000 in for the boardwalk and it has never been spent so it goes back into fund balance. He was approved to put \$10,000 into the operating budget for the boardwalk and it was never spent. He has not been approved to say \$30,000 is for the boardwalk by this board. That is up to you. Armbrust replied it is \$30,000. Ollis stated it is \$30,000 over three operating years. Armbrust responded let's earmark the \$30,000 for Pacolet Street. Crowell asked how far up the street does this go. Ollis responded it's one side and it goes almost to the Baptist Church. Crowell responded that is for nonprofits there is no way they don't pay taxes. Ollis responded Ian Griggs started redoing John Walters building. They have retail upfront and live/work units in the back. If you look at the concrete there is four generations of concrete. They are going to have to pull it out to fix the issue that they have. Then there will be five generations of concrete. Greg Young called him up and asked if the town was going to do anything there. If not, he will cover back up what he has done. If so, he will hold off spending his \$2,500. Peoples doesn't see the \$30,000 like Armbrust does. The owners need to clean up back there. We need parking, etc. Ollis needs to know \$35,000 or \$42,564. Armbrust replied it needs to be the \$42,564 to match the other sidewalks. Everyone agreed.

Mayor Peoples had to leave the meeting.

POLICE

Captain Hodge thanked the board for their support they provide the police department along with Town Manager Zach Ollis. The Police budget really hasn't changed from last year. Dispatch overtime went over budget so they are increasing the line item. Overall, the budget remains the same. We are still on course with the salary line items. Ollis responded we are including Jeff's salary for his vacation time through his retirement. This budget allows for the same number of positions except for Jeff. The dispatch overtime has gone up, because we can't find people to work. It's hard to find anyone in law enforcement. Both Jeff and Randall have agreed to cover the open position until they find the right fit.

Hodge explained the vehicle situation. The one vehicle is five years old and two other vehicles around three years. Over the last three years the cost of vehicles has increased by \$8,000. The quote received in January when the 2023 come out the cost will increase. The thought process is to ask for two new cars. We would save money now. Ollis replied you have your installment purchases which includes one extra vehicle, because we paid one off last year. The last SUV we purchased was around \$31,000 now the cost is \$39,000. Ingham asked what are we going to do with the ones we have. Hodge explained this helps with the cost.

Armbrust asked what about new equipment. Hodge responded this is the biggest change for the Police. Ingham replied we will take it under consideration. Crowell asked if they were good with all their body armor and equipment. Hodge responded yes sir. Armbrust asked what do you do with the old armor. Hodge responded it goes into a box upstairs, because you can't give it to the public.

Ollis responded obviously they are always looking for deals on equipment. What's really helped the budget is changing from the Dodge to Ford. The maintenance is a lot less. The body cameras turn on and if you are within thirty feet, it will turn yours on also.

Armbrust asked when Jeff retires. Ollis responded October 1, 2022. His vacation will start sometime in July. He will put Randall in as Interim Chief in July. Jeff will still be around if anything is needed. It will be a tough transition. We have had the discussion with Jeff and Randall. Randall has the attitude of the community. He is about community policing and doing those things that people talk about a lot. Ingham thinks Randall is a great fit. He feels Jeff deserves to be with his family. Crowell asked how long Randall had been in law enforcement. Randall responded twenty-five years. Ollis responded it is up to you and to him to keep people.

Ollis-That's all that he has for now.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Ingham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

J. Alan Peoples, Mayor

Attest:

Susan B. Bell, Town Clerk