

BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
CALLED MEETING/BUDGET WORKSHOP

JUNE 29, 2015

The Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BMA) MET in a Called Meeting/Budget Workshop on Monday, June 29, 2015, at 7:00 p.m., at Town Hall, 123 Boone Street, Jonesborough, TN.

Mayor Kelly Wolfe called the meeting to order. Alderman Dickson led the group in Prayer and Operations Manager Craig Ford led the pledge to the Flag.

Upon call of the roll those present were: Mayor Kelly Wolfe, Alderman Terry Countermine, Alderman Adam Dickson, and Alderman David Sell. Alderman Chuck Vest arrived late. Also present were: Town Administrator Bob Browning, Town Recorder Abbey Miller, and Operations Manager Craig Ford.

The first item on the agenda was the FY 2015-2016 State Highway Maintenance Agreement. Mayor Wolfe said the Town has a good relationship with TDOT and recommended entering into this agreement with TDOT. Motion was made by Alderman Countermine, seconded by Alderman Dickson and duly passed to approve the TDOT State Highway Maintenance contract for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 beginning July 1, 2015.

INSERT AGREEMENT

The next item on the agenda was the approval of JRT volunteer van drivers. Mayor Wolfe said this action is necessary because there is a trip planned to New York City for JRT participants to attend a workshop and the group will rent a van in New York and will need approved drivers. Motion was made by Alderman Dickson, seconded by Alderman Countermine and duly passed to approve Pamela G. Johnson, Kate Anderson, and Robert Shawn Hale as JRT volunteer van drivers for Jonesborough.

The next item on the agenda was appointment of Public Safety Officers. Mayor Wolfe asked if there were any questions concerning this. There were none. Motion was made by Alderman Countermine, seconded by Alderman Sell and duly passed to approve the hiring of Justin Davis and Avis Smith as Public Safety Officers in the Police Department at Grade 10 Step 2 (34,059) subject to all pre-employment conditions including WorkSteps.

The next item on the agenda was the appointment of a Water Treatment Plant Director. Mayor Wolfe said this item would be deferred until the July 13, 2015, Regular BMA meeting.

The next item on the agenda was the approval of a Resolution for the Continuation of the FY 2014-2015 Budget. Mayor Wolfe said this is a recognition that the FY 2015-2016 budget process will not be completed by June 30th, and the recommendation is to continue the FY 2014-15 budget until the new budget is approved. Motion was made by Alderman Sell, seconded by Alderman Countermine and duly passed to approve the Resolution adopting a continuing budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015, until a new budget is passed by the Town Board for FY 2015-2016.

INSERT RESOLUTION

The next item on the agenda was the proposed lease for radio equipment for the Public Safety Department. Mayor Wolfe said we had our own radio system at one point, but later went on one shared with the Johnson City and Washington County, and now we are seeing a large increase in the cost to share the system. He said the Town could own its own system for less money, but there are concerns about leaving the Johnson

City system. He said that he and Craig Ford met with Pete Peterson, Johnson City Manager, and explained that the \$90,000 they were asking for Town's participation in upgrading their system was not something the Town could afford. Mayor Wolfe said with the new system being proposed, we can still maintain contact with Johnson City through Dispatch and some radios. Mayor Wolfe added that the Town can sell some of the current radio equipment and according to Metro Communication, we should be able to cover the cost of the radio console which is around \$65,000. Mr. Ford said his concern about the radio equipment is that we will not know the bottom dollar amount we can get for trade-in until the new equipment is installed. He added that there is another county interested in purchasing the old system. Mr. Browning recommended that we lease the radio system for \$104,000 over a five-year period. Mr. Ford said the first lease payment will not be due for ninety (90) days. Alderman Countermine asked if the lease includes maintenance. Mr. Ford said there is some warranty with the system but there is no on-going maintenance fee included. Mr. Ford said the system bridge would allow the Town to communicate with Johnson City, and if desired, we can add some of the other Town crews on this system. Alderman Sell asked which of the terms on Option 1 – 6 is being recommended and Ms. Miller said the last one. He asked if this type equipment changes like computers change and will have to be upgraded after a few years. Mr. Ford said it does. Mr. Ford said he hopes to get \$60,000 - \$70,000 for the old equipment. Motion was made by Alderman Countermine, seconded by Alderman Vest and duly passed to authorize the Mayor and staff to enter into a lease agreement with Metro Communications to obtain and have installed a new radio communication system in Jonesborough for an approximate cost of \$104,000 with the lease payments to be paid from budgeted funds.

INSERT AGREEMENT

The next item on the agenda was the Budget Workshop. Mayor Wolfe said he met with Mr. Browning and Mr. Ford last Friday and discussed the budget proposals in depth. He said Jonesborough has done a good job historically estimating revenues. He said they decreased the Water Park salaries by \$30,000 for 2015-16. Ms. Miller said the Water Park is doing better financially than last year and is projected to be \$40,000 - \$50,000 better than last year. Mr. Browning said in the past the Water Park has been budgeted on a break-even basis but for the 2015-16 budget it is estimated at a \$40,000 loss which is much more realistic. Mayor Wolfe said the budget proposal includes the PS radio system and more paving, and he feels the staff has struck a good balance with budget proposals. He said he wanted to discuss with Chief Hawkins his request for an additional Investigator. He said to include an additional investigator in the Public Safety Department there would need to be a five cent increase in the property tax rate. He said the budget can be balanced without a property tax increase if we do not include the additional investigator. Chief Hawkins addressed the Board and said the Police Department needs a full time dedicated investigator. He said for the last few years his department has not had that, and for the last several years there has been a decline in the clearance rate for burglaries; in 2008 we had a 64% clearance rate and now we have a 47% clearance rate. He added that it is dangerous for an investigator to go out on an investigation alone. Chief Hawkins said Major Matt Rice is the investigator for the Department at the present time, but he is also the Operations Major for the department. Chief Hawkins said all residents deserve dedicated efforts to their cases regardless of the cost, but this is hard to do with only one investigator. Alderman Vest said this investigator has been requested for several years and he feels it is something that we need. He then asked how much we are saving Johnson City by doing their NCIC checks. He asked if there could be a charge for this service that could offset some of the cost for the additional investigator. Mr. Ford said several years ago Johnson City closed their after-hours operation to cut costs. He said Johnson City approached 911 and the Washington County Sheriff's office to ask them to take over the after-hours duties, but they declined so they then came to Jonesborough. Mr. Ford said we do the NCIC checks for Johnson City after hours for various crimes. Alderman Vest asked why Jonesborough does that at no charge. Mr. Ford said in actuality it does not add additional work for Jonesborough and it helps the dispatchers keep up with their NCIC skills. He said this is done after hours and on weekends. Alderman Vest said they are wanting to charge us an additional amount for the radio system but we continue to offer

the NCIC service for free to them. Mr. Ford said he feels it is beneficial to the Town and added Johnson City brought their software computer to the office and hooked it up for us. Mayor Wolfe said having a Johnson City Fire Department ladder truck come to Jonesborough when we get a fire call downtown is very beneficial. Mayor Wolfe said we could ask Chief Hawkins and Mr. Ford to talk with Johnson City and see if there is a reasonable modification that could be made to the agreement. Alderman Vest said we could find other funds within the budget in order to get the investigator hired and does not feel we should increase the property tax rate. Alderman Countermine said this is the fifth year we are giving our employees a five percent salary increase and property taxes have not been increased during that same period. He said this is something needed in Public Safety and a five cent property tax increase is reasonable. Mayor Wolfe said revenue growth has been used to fund the salary increases. Alderman Countermine said we have low taxes and people are moving here because of the quality of life in Jonesborough. Alderman Sell said we need an additional investigator but he is not in favor of raising property taxes. He said we need to look at other ways to fund this position. Alderman Vest asked if the Drug Fund could be used to help fund this position. Chief Hawkins said there are restrictions on the Drug Fund and those funds have to be dedicated to drug enforcement and follow certain criteria. Alderman Dickson said we all care about safety in Jonesborough, and he hoped that the citizens would be supportive of a modest increase in taxes. Mayor Wolfe said people are choosing to live in Jonesborough and he feels it is due to a commitment by this Board and Town staff to our community. He said whether it is the arts or law enforcement or other activities, the people involved in these are passionate about what they are doing. He said the passion that people have in different areas such as Storytelling, JRT, tourism, Heritage Alliance, Historic Churches, Progressive Dinners, McKinney Center, etc., is what makes Jonesborough special. Mayor Wolfe thanked Chief Hawkins for his passion concerning law enforcement in Jonesborough. Chief Hawkins said he would like to thank the Board for the last four years increase of 5% in salaries and added that it has helped in recruiting good employees.

Mayor Wolfe asked if any other department heads would like to address the Board. Fire Chief Phil Fritts addressed the Board and said he has two fire trucks that are each over twenty years old and he has added a Capital Outlay request to his department budget to purchase a new fire truck. He said there is an existing capital outlay note on one of the current trucks that will be paid off in December. He said we need to purchase at least one truck if not two. He added that he would like to have administrative help but is not asking for that in the new year. Chief Fritts said the ISO rating will go down if the trucks are twenty-five years old.

Alderman Vest asked where the Redflex money is put into the budget. Mr. Browning said it goes into Reserve Funds and is allocated for projects and is not a budgeted item.

The next item on the agenda was approval of the FY 2015-16 Compensation Plan. Mayor Wolfe said this is the last of the five year 5% salary increase for employees and a 3% increase in employee contributions to health insurance premiums. Mayor Wolfe said this has been a big deal for employees and added that the BMA values Town employees very much. Alderman Vest said his first year on the Board he said we were paying our employees with health insurance premiums and not with salaries, but that is now not the case. Motion was made by Alderman Vest, seconded by Alderman Countermine and duly passed to approve the FY 2015-16 Compensation Plan as presented:

INSERT COMPENSATION PLAN

The meeting was duly adjourned.

ABBAY MILLER, RECORDER

KELLY WOLFE, MAYOR