

March 15, 2021 – Virtual Town Council Budget Work Session

Town of Onancock
Town Council – Virtual Budget Work Session
March 15, 2021
7:00 p.m.

Mayor Fosque opened with an explanation of how the Work Session would operate. Stating that this is a preliminary discussion of the FY2022 budget, nothing will be voted on at this meeting and no public discussion will be entertained. Mayor Fosque shared that public input will be heard during the official public hearing in the April Town Council meeting.

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Mayor Fosque called the virtual meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and roll was called. Mayor Fletcher Fosque and Councilmembers Robert Bloxom, Joy Marino, Catherine Krause, Ray Burger, Maphis Oswald and Thelma Gillespie were present. All members were present, and a quorum was established.

Presentation by Onancock Main Street Regarding Town Logo and Branding, Mr. Robert Spoth and Mrs. Karin Rush-Monroe: Mrs. Rush-Monroe shared that the Onancock Main Street organization received a marketing grant for branding. Onancock Main Street enlisted the services of a marketing firm, Otto, to help rebrand the town. Mr. Pete Leddy, President of Otto, presented the rebranding process to Town Council. Mrs. Rush-Monroe explained that Council will hear this presentation again at their regular Town Council meeting on March 22, 2021. At that meeting Town Council will be asked to formally adopt the new brand, logo and tagline.

Councilmember Oswald for clarification on “A Little Slice of Nowhere Else”. Mr. Leddy shared that it is the tagline or slogan that has been selected for Onancock.

Mayor Fosque explained that Town Council will get to decide if this is also the tagline, slogan and logo that the town wants to use. Mr. Spuck stressed the importance of continuity of slogan and logo for town organizations.

Budget FY2022 – Town Council Workshop:

Mr. Spuck explained that Town Council was already presented with the summary of the proposed budget in the February Town Council meeting. Mr. Spuck shared that staff went through the budget line by line, department by department to be able to present to Council with this budget proposal. Mr. Spuck asked if there were any Council questions.

Councilmember Krause asked if there were any funds designated in this proposal for water infringement and infrastructure, stating that there are several areas in Town that have these types of issues. Mr. Spuck shared that he is hoping that once the weather improves these issues will be addressed in this fiscal year. Mr. Spuck explained that there are two freshwater issues and two wastewater issues. Mr. Spuck shared further that the Town will be going through a leak detection process this week to help determine the source of these issues.

Councilmember Marino asked that Town Council get a report on the Town reserves. Mr. Spuck shared that he sent a report on the reserves earlier but that he would send it again. Mr. Spuck explained to Town Council how the reserves come to be, when the Town saves money during a fiscal year those

dollars become the Town's reserve funds. These funds help with grant matching requirements for grants that have not yet been applied for as well as unfunded emergencies.

Councilmember Marino asked about Mrs. Fiege's salary being divided among the Administration and Water Departments. Mr. Spuck explained that Mrs. Fiege spends a portion of her time on water billing and account maintenance and therefore some of her salary should come from that department.

Councilmember Bloxom shared that through his discussions with the Town's auditors that Town should be reviewing more closely how employee time is spent so that their wage allocation is representative of that time.

Mayor Fosque asked if the Town should also be planning on a sewer budget in case the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) does not take over the sewer plant. Mr. Spuck shared that the contract negotiations are plugging along, and they are on their second iteration. Mr. Spuck did say that should the deal fall through a sewer budget will need to be drafted.

Mayor Fosque asked about worker's compensation for the police department, it appears to be a new expenditure for the department was the Town paying for that already. Mr. Spuck explained that there used to be an insurance department, he is removing that department and disbursing those expenses to the appropriate departments.

Mayor Fosque asked that Council consider increasing the Holiday Decoration line item, stating that there are still items to be purchased. Mr. Spuck shared that he may have a solution to increase that line item without changing the budget. The Waterfront Committee has discussed the lot on King Street, which the Town rented last year for \$4,800. The discussion centered around the cost/benefit of the lot. Not many trailers fit in the lot, due to poor parking efforts and not many trailers even tried last year. Some Waterfront Committee members want to try it for one more year, some do not. The owner of the lot has offered the lot to the Town at a reduced rate, \$3,000, for half the year. If Town Council opts to do that, the \$4,800 that has been budgeted for the lot for the full year can reroute the unnecessary \$1,800 to the Holiday Decorations line item. Town Council agreed to give the lot one more year but at the reduced rate for half the year.

Councilmember Gillespie asked why the Landscaping Department budget went up 239%. Mr. Spuck explained that it is due to salaries. Currently, the people who landscape for the Town get paid out of a different department. Mr. Spuck is restructuring the Department of Public Works and now one person will be in charge of Water, one in charge of Buildings and Roads, and one in charge of Landscaping and each one's salaries and benefits will come from their home department.

Mayor Fosque reminded everyone that the Public Hearing will be held in the April Town Council meeting.

Councilmember Gillespie asked why the trash revenue tripled. Mr. Spuck explained that in the past Council reduced the trash fee to help residents with their water bills but what the Town collects does not cover the cost of the service. In this proposed budget, the trash fee is increased to help cover the actual cost incurred.

Councilmember Oswald asked about the minimum water bill charge in the coming year. Mr. Spuck explained that if HRSD adjusts their billing tiers to match the towns the new minimum will be approximately \$105.00 as oppose to the current minimum of \$111.87. Councilmember Oswald asked

how confident Mr. Spuck was that HSRD would change the tiers. Mr. Spuck shared that the bill could be end up being higher if HRSD does not accept the change, if that is the case the Town will keep the current water and sewer rates.

Councilmember Marino asked why Mr. Craig Tanner’s salary was being divided into the Wharf and Building and Roads Departments. Mr. Spuck explained that during the winter months when the Wharf is closed Mr. Tanner assists the other department.

Councilmember Bloxom commended Mr. Spuck and Mrs. Fiege for their work on the budget.

Councilmember Burger shared that he hopes to find money for the Historic Onancock School Community Center in future budgets.

Adjourn:

Councilmember Bloxom made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Marino seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.



Fletcher Fosque, Mayor



Lisa Fiege, Deputy Clerk