

Special Meeting Minutes  
Budget Workshop  
March 25, 2014

The Governing Body of the Town of Middlesex met in Special Session for the purpose of holding a budget workshop. Mayor Luther H. Lewis, Jr., called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. Members present were Commissioners Harold Meacombs, Danny Alford, Cherrye Davis, Ann Lewis, and J.W. McClenny. Police Chief Dennis Murray and Sergeant Scott Pollard were in attendance, as well as Amanda Clark, a Nashville Graphic reporter.

Mayor Lewis began by reviewing a list of current rates, services, and fees and items which need to be decided and compiled to complete the 2014-15 budget.

Based on the 2013 property tax scroll, for every \$.01 increase in the tax rate, revenues generated would be \$4,750, less the 2% collection fee. The last property tax increase was in 1992. Clerk Lambert has requested estimates for the 2014 tax billing from Nash County.

Current sanitation rates are \$13.75 per month for residential and \$21.50 for businesses, along with a \$3.00 recycle fee. A residence is allowed one garbage cart and a business is allowed two carts. Extra recycle carts are no charge and extra garbage carts are \$10 each.

Lewis advised thirty (30) recycle carts have already been ordered at a cost of \$2,000 and we have about the same number of green garbage carts on hand. This stock should suffice for the next fiscal year, probably longer.

Employee performance reviews will be completed for Dennis Murray, Jennifer Lambert, Scott Pollard and Sammy Drake to be included in the new budget. Other reviews were completed in February 2014.

In a note to the Board, Clerk Lambert advised that the layout in the administrative office at town hall no longer suits the needs. Employees backs are to the public and computer screens are open to public view. The current desks are not suitable for computer workstations, and there appears to be no easy solution to the layout problem.

Mayor Lewis brought to the Board's attention that the dental office/medical facility needs roofing and heating/air units. The community building has a drainage problem which is an immediate need. The entire lot needs to be redone to keep water away from the building. Commissioner Lewis and Mayor Lewis will review needs at the community building for the current year and next year's budget. Mayor Lewis asked the other Commissioners to go look at the building.

The baby swimming pool was not used last year and Mayor Lewis recommended that it be filled in with concrete, adding it was another pump to maintain. He will use community service workers to clean the concrete when weather permits. The pool will be open Memorial Day through Labor Day and we may need to advertise for pool workers if the same workers are not available this year. Lewis would like to set reduced rates for later in the season. He recommended the other Commissioners to go take a look.

Commissioner Alford and Mayor Lewis have compiled a list of Powell Bill streets to be paved in the current year budget and will get a list of paving companies to solicit bids. Streets will be prioritized and more streets may be added if the costs renders it advantageous to do so. The gravel portion of Jones and East Hanes are on the list, along with Cope Avenue, which is in bad shape. We will also look at needs for next year.

Mayor Lewis requested input from the Board regarding the "One Card Agreement" with Braswell Library, which will be at no cost for the 2014-2015 year. The recurring cost for future years is projected at \$1,000 per year. Opting out at any time requires a sixty (60) day notification. The effective date of the agreement is March 17, 2014. Patrons could check out and return books at any participating library and Braswell Library IT department handles all computer repairs. Commissioner Ann Lewis commented in favor of the agreement and everyone agreed we could enter the agreement for one year to see how beneficial it would be to Middlesex patrons.

Computer software maintenance costs for next year for the town hall and police departments were reviewed, along with community building rental fees, cemetery, and other miscellaneous fees.

There was a brief discussion about costs related to water tower maintenance. The town does not have a current contract. Mayor Lewis has some contract quotes, which he will get updated, along with checking with Nash County about the possibility of working with them to get a better price through the same company. Some companies base pricing on the CPI and some increase prices every fourth year. Commissioner Meacombs noted that \$7,500 was in the current budget for tower maintenance, and suggested that if the town does not go with a contract, we should put money in reserves for tower maintenance. Proposed pricing will be submitted at a later budget meeting for review and discussion.

Envirolink, the town's contracted ORC (Operator in Responsible Charge) for the water system, continues to have a good response time. They had a 2% price increase in July 2013 and we have not been advised regarding next year. The contract has automatically renewed. By contracting with Environlink, we have access to equipment that the town would not otherwise have and we continue to have a good relationship.

The only debt service for 2014-2015 at this time is \$103,786.55, and this annual amount continues until paid in full in 2017-2018. A total of \$66,000 has been reserved

for this debt and we need an additional \$38,000. A current list of CD's by fund was included in the budget packet for review and discussion.

The current water access fee is \$8.00 per mo. and \$4.50 per 1,000 gallons. Current sewer access fee is \$15 per mo. and \$13.75 per 1,000 gallons. Mayor Lewis noted that in earlier discussions with the City of Raleigh, they projected a six (6) percent increase in wastewater treatment fees for July 1, 2014.

The Board agreed in February of 2012 to replace CD reserves cashed in to pay water and sewer debt service equal to the amount of the annual payment of \$6,000 for water per year and \$12,000 for sewer. We have not been able to accomplish this in the current 2013-2014 year.

Mayor Lewis reported that the East Coast Packaging Building Reuse Capital Project is ongoing and the deadline was just extended.

Mayor Lewis requested Board members wishing to add any capital equipment purchases (items over \$2,500) to bring recommendations and pricing information to the next budget session.

Clerk Lambert has received pricing from two credit card processors to begin processing debit/credit card transactions. Mayor Lewis and Lambert will be reviewing the material and discussing with the contractors in the coming weeks.

Police Chief Dennis Murray requested to purchase five new handguns and that the officers be able to purchase their current handgun. Murray presented the Board with a picture of new decals for all five police cars at an estimated cost of \$4,500. He noted the current decals are cracking and peeling.

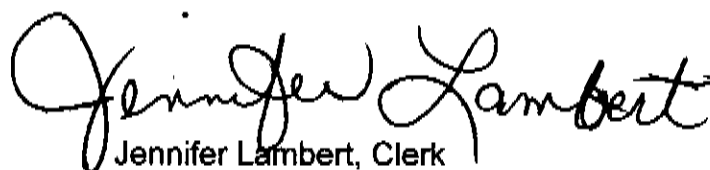
Murray also requested a new vehicle and Mayor Lewis will get copies of the quote to all Commissioners. Body Armor (bullet proof vests) needs to be replaced every five years and that would cost approximately \$2,750. Chief Murray also requested a new position for a full time fifth police officer.

Mayor Lewis, advised that the Utility Department's old Ford pickup truck has high mileage, but can still be used. The vinyl seats and flooring need replacing. He has searched but has not found a good used work truck. Commissioner McClenny and Mayor Lewis had looked at a new 61-inch cut lawn mower with a rear discharge several months ago. Since that time, Commissioner Ann Lewis has been appointed Cemetery Commissioner. Mayor Lewis requested that we seriously consider this mower for the cemetery to keep grass off the stones and markers and keep the current 52-inch mowers. The 6-inch mower cannot get through all the spaces, so would continue to use the weed

eaters. Mayor Lewis advised if the Board decides to purchase a mower this budget year versus next year, the money could be probably be moved from another department in the budget.

In the final topic, Mayor Lewis advised the Board that he continues to work on grant applications with the COG, Envirolink, and Russell Underwood, Inc. to resolve our sewer problems. Smoke testing is in progress to identify sewer infiltration.

With no further discussion this time, Commissioner Meacombs moved to adjourn the budget workshop. Commissioner Alford seconded and the vote was unanimous.



Jennifer Lambert, Clerk

Mayor Luther H. Lewis, Jr.,  
Commissioners  
Harold Meacombs  
Danny Alford  
Cherrye Davis  
Ann Lewis  
J.W. McClenny