

April 19, 2010
Meeting Minutes

The Middlesex Governing Body held a special meeting for a Budget Workshop in the Conference Room of the Town Hall. Mayor Luther H. Lewis, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:30p.m. Members present were Commissioners Harold Meacombs, Fred Hough, Luke Robinson and J.W. McClenny. Diane Swindell, the town's NC 401K representative, Dale Bachmann, and Police Sergeant Dennis Murray were in attendance.

In the first item of business, Clerk Jennifer Lambert administered the oath of office to Dale Bachmann, who was unanimously appointed to replace Commissioner Derek Bissette at the April 12th, 2010 regular meeting.

Mayor Lewis appointed Dale Bachmann as Commissioner over the Water and Sewer Departments and changed Commissioner Harold Meacombs from Water and Sewer to Sanitation and Police Departments. In a motion by Commissioner Meacombs, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, and carried unanimously, Dale Bachmann was named as a check co-signer for the town.

Diane Swindell, NC401K Plan representative, addressed the Board requesting the Board to consider contributing the same percentage to the 401K plan for all employees, treating all employees the same. Mrs. Swindell had asked Peggy Bissette to give her figures on the 401K plan for fiscal year. She advised the Board that for only \$2,080.89, the Board could have increased the five general employees to a 5% contribution, which is what the police officers have received since the NC General Assembly mandated 5% for all law enforcement officers effective 1986. Mrs. Swindell pointed out that the towns of Ahoskie and Elizabeth City began contributing the 5% for all employees in 1986 because they felt all employees were equally important to the operation of the town. Mrs. Swindell urged the Commissioners to follow the lead of these towns, along with Spring Hope, Zebulon and Knightdale in giving 5% contribution to the general employees also, stating that it would mean so much to these five employees. Mrs. Swindell asked the Board if they would find it in their hearts and budget to treat all employees equally and asked if the Board would take this matter to a vote. Mayor Lewis said "no, they would not be voting on anything tonight, but would take the matter into consideration" and he thanked Mrs. Swindell for coming by and she thanked the Board for their time.

Administrator Bissette reviewed expenditures and revenues for each fund by line item and there were a few items pointed out that need to be corrected. Among the highlights in the General Fund were:

- (1) Salaries were left as they are in the current fiscal year budget at the request of Mayor Lewis.
- (2) In Public Buildings expenditures, \$65,000 was included for wall repairs due to roof leaks, repairing roof, and carpet and tile for town hall. More money will need to be added for a new roof.
- (3) The Police Departments computer server has been giving problems and Chief Ferrell requested to add \$5,000 for a new server.
- (4) Administrator Bissette advised the Board that the Powell Bill funds indicate the town needs to spend money on street paving. Clerk Lambert stated the town has over \$279,000 dollars in Powell Bill reserve CD's. Mayor Lewis and Commissioner Hough will get a list together of streets which need to be paved and present to the Board at the next meeting.
- (5) Nash County has advised they will not increase the library contribution and there is a possibility it may decrease.
- (6) The total General Fund budget of \$793,204 uses \$204,274 in fund balance reserve to balance this fund budget
- (7) The League of Municipalities and the State Treasurer's office have both notified the town that all state distributed revenues will be decreased this year due to the economy.

Highlights in the Water and Sewer Fund were:

- (1) The total Sewer budget is \$358,730 and would use \$92,630 in fund balance reserve to balance this department.
- (2) Administrator Bissette made the Board aware of a new round of State grants that could be applied for and used to rehab sewer lines, Mayor Lewis asked Bissette to let Engineer Michael Acquesta know we are interested and get some more info regarding the timeline, when the application is due, and for what amount we should apply.
- (3) The total Water Budget is \$152,035 and would use \$49,985 in fund balance reserve to balance this department.
- (4) No Capital Projects or Capital Equipment have been included in this budget and no requests have been made at this time.
- (5) Bissette advised the Board that a study completed on the Water and Sewer Revenues and Expenditures so far for the current year indicates that the sewer rates are okay, but the flat accessibility fee added for water on September 1, 2009 should probably have been \$10 instead of \$8 per month.

The Capital Project Fund for the Well Construction and Meter Replacement Project will remain at \$355,100.

Mayor Lewis advised the Board that the grant which the town applied for on behalf of Nash County for the Middlesex Corporate Park water lines was approved for \$50,000 and the county would pick up the remainder of the tab. This capital project would have to be added to the current year budget and continue into the next fiscal year.

Bissette also reviewed a study for the Separation Allowance benefit for law enforcement. She recommended that the Board may want to begin putting some money in savings for this purpose. An officer making \$35,000 a year retiring at age 55 with 20 years of service would cost the town \$41,650 in payments from age 55 to age 62. An officer making \$35,000 a year retiring at age 55 with 30 years of service would cost the town \$62,470 in payments from age 55 to age 62.

A current salary spreadsheet with salaries split by department and all current benefits calculated was also presented to the Board for review. In reviewing the 401K and retirement percentages, Mayor Lewis commented that the police department gets a higher percentage of 401K contribution and retirement contribution, making a total 2% more contribution by the town for the police officers above the general employees.

The Board set a Closed Session meeting for Monday, April 26th at 7:30pm in the Conference Room at the town hall to discuss employee performance evaluations and no one is to be present but the Board members.

Being no further business, Commissioner Meacombs moved to adjourn.

Jennifer Lambert
Clerk

Mayor Luther H. Lewis, Jr.
Commissioners
Harold Meacombs
Fred Hough
Luke Robinson
Dale Bachmann
J.W. McClenny