

Special Meeting Minutes
Budget Workshop
May 1, 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, and only one citizen attended.

Mayor Lewis began by reviewing the 2014 property tax estimate from Nash County totaling \$48,234,000 in valuation, which would be equivalent to \$241,170 in tax revenue. The town has not increased the property tax rate since 1992, over twenty years. For each \$.01 increase in the tax rate, revenues generated would result in \$4,823 in revenue, less Nash County's collection fee of 2% for real and 1½% for vehicle tax. Mayor Lewis referred to a yearly comparison of tax revenues since 2007 for the Board to review.

Quotes for three plans have been received from Blue Cross/Blue Shield. If the town keeps the current coverage plan, the rate increases 19.8%. The other two alternate plans increased 16.3% and 1.8% from the current plan. The Affordable Care Act has a total of nine available plans and these three were the top three closest to our current coverage. We will be receiving quotes from United Healthcare and also looking at each employee having individual policy coverage. The town can continue with the current plan, but if we move to a new plan, we cannot go back to the same plan. More information will be forthcoming.

The Police Department has requested a new vehicle. The Dodge Charger is \$21,867, and the Ford Explorer is \$26,330. Two lighting quotes were presented for \$3,223.01 versus \$2457.89. Lettering for the new vehicle would run \$550 or \$750 for reflective vinyl. Mayor Lewis pointed out he had found several 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 models of white Crown Vic police cars online with 30,000 miles or a little more for \$10-\$15,000. He also noted that in his opinion, he had rather buy a used Crown Vic and see the difference in money in salary increases for the police officers. No recommendation was made at this time.

A request for new Glock handguns at \$525 each was presented. Mayor Lewis noted the weapons were old and need replacing. Mayor Lewis asked the Board come up with a repurchase price for the officers to buy their weapon.

Employee salary distributions to various departments were reviewed and some were recommended to be changed to more accurately reflect workflow changes and responsibilities.

A survey was presented and reviewed for Town Board salaries compared to other local municipalities. No recommendation was made at this time.

After reviewing the fee charged for fax services, Commissioner Meacombs moved to change the fax fee from \$2.50 per page to \$1.00 per page effective May 1, 2014. After a second from Commissioner Alford, the vote was unanimous.

Community building rental and deposit rates were discussed and no action was taken at this time. Clerk Lambert will collect compare rates of other similar rental buildings and present at the May 12, 2014 regular meeting. Mayor Lewis will obtain a quote to change the bathroom to handicapped-accessible, which requires a wall to be moved. A review of revenues and expenditures since 2007 for the community building indicated a breakeven status after deducting the capital projects completed (storm windows and parking lot work).

Comparisons of revenue versus expenditures for Hollywood Cemetery since 2007 shows the cemetery is self-sustaining after deducting the capital projects (paving driveway and the cemetery wall).

Both the community building and the cemetery are part of General Fund money supported by tax dollars, and if the rates remain constant, expenditures to cover capital improvements made need to come in the form of a property tax increase. Commissioner Ann Lewis will contact the land owner of adjoining land to discuss the town's interest in a small tract to "square off" the newer section of the cemetery.

A quote from Southern Corrosion for a water tower contract totaled \$7,700 per year, and the price changes every fourth year are based on the CPI. Southern Corrosion is a NC company with several good references. Caldwell Tank submitted a quote of \$11,000 per year, and unlike the Southern Corrosion quote, it was vague on what was covered. Mayor Lewis also has a quote of \$995 from Pittsburgh Tank to clean out the tower. They have a robot and the tower would not have to be drained. We do not have a contract quote from them at this time. Painting the outside of the tower would run about \$26,000. Prices for "a la carte" maintenance can be compared to a contract price. No decision was made at this time. Mayor Lewis suggested that if the town does not go with a contract, we should put money in reserves for tower maintenance.

Ivey Security submitted a renewal quote with a slight increase for the town's lift station alarm monitoring. Mayor Lewis will check prices with another alarm company.

Codification of the town's Code of Ordinances was discussed briefly. Bailey paid \$10,000 to have their town code codified and for ten sets of the code in 2006. Clerk Lambert reported that the town code was in good condition in contrast to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances that have not been updated since 1989. They are in dire need of updating. Lambert recommended that the Planning Board work with NC Division of

Community Assistance, which would be at a minimal cost. This agency worked with the town to develop the updated Land Use Plan in 2007.

Other miscellaneous items Mayor Lewis reported to the Board were as follows:

- 1) Property & Liability Insurance for the Bailey Middlesex Park concession stands and bathrooms, etc. must be invoiced to one town. Therefore, Bailey will pay the entire invoice and Middlesex will reimburse Bailey for half the cost.
- 2) Mayor Lewis has found someone from Raleigh to take all the town's e-recycle (electronics). The town will pick up the e-recycle (TV's, computers, etc.) Hopefully, he will bring a ten-yard dumpster to store items inside the fence at Selma Road until full.
- 3) All eight Mayors of the Nash County municipalities are against the \$25 fee to the town's citizens for use of the Stoney Hill mound. They will meet again and will go back to Nash County and try to persuade them to change their mind.
- 4) When the back corner of Hanes Park dries out from all the rain, the bathrooms need work and the area needs mulch. A walkway from the picnic area to the bathrooms will be made by making borders and placing existing pavers in the mulch.
- 5) The walking trail at the Wellness Park needs more screenings and the second driveway to the well house has washed out in areas. People are driving on the walking tract. We need signs or stakes of some kind.
- 6) Free shelving for the new file room in the old jail is not available now, but the source will call us when it becomes available.
- 7) Once paving quotes are received for this year and it is determined if one street on the paving list needs to be completely torn up, some streets on the list may have to be moved to be paved next year.

After a brief discussion regarding the swimming pool fees, the consensus of the Board was to leave the fees the same as last year. A season pass for the family sells for \$250, or a \$40 pass for ten visits is available. The season pass will be reduced to \$175 July 1, and to \$100 August 1. The pool should be open Memorial Day weekend and closed Labor Day weekend. Mayor Lewis will begin interviewing applicants for pool attendants. Gary Lee, President of the FWB Children's Home, has already expressed interest in the same summer program at the pool as in previous years.

Commissioner Meacombs moved to go into Closed Session as allowed by G.S.143-318.11(a)(6) for performance evaluations for July 1 and another personnel matter. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McClenny and passed unanimously.

With no further discussion at this time, Commissioner Meacombs moved to adjourn the budget workshop. Commissioner McClenny 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