



Meeting Minutes - Final Committee of the Whole

Thursday, May 2, 2019

6:00 PM

City Hall

1 Roll Call

Council: Mayor A. Max Bacon, Tim Gould, Ron Fennel, Charles "Corkey" Welch, Andrea Blustein, Susan Wilkinson, Derek Norton

Absent: Maryline Blackburn

Staff: Tammi Saddler Jones (City Administrator), Christy Ullman (Ex. Asst. to the M&C), Scott Cochran (City Attorney), Mary K. Arvin (Admin. Svc. Coord.), Roy Acree (Fire Chief), Frank Martin (Public Works Director), Officer Frank Durrance (SPD), Kristin Robinson (Finance Director), Bo Jones (Asst. Public Works Director), Frank Martin, Jered Sigmon (Budget Officer), Kay Bolick (Director), Kristin Robinson (Finance Director), Chris Addicks (IT Director), Janet Liberman (Keep Smyrna Beautiful – Director), Maxwell Ruppensburg (Special Projects Coordinator), Frank Durrance (City of Smyrna Major)

Guests: City of Smyrna resident: Louis Wheaton from Ward 7

2. Call to Order

Mayor Max Bacon called the May 2, 2019 Committee of the Whole Meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

3. Proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Presentation:

- Kristin Robinson, Finance Director

- Jered Sigmon, Budget Officer

Mayor Max Bacon introduced the Finance Director Kristin Robinson and Budget Officer Jered Sigmon to cover the Fiscal Year 2020 total proposed budget. City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones turned the meeting over to Ms. Robinson and Mr. Sigmon. Mayor Bacon asked when did attendees receive their budget books; several in attendance responded yesterday and last evening. Budget Officer Jared said the 2019 budget of \$92,215,688 will be published May 3 in the Marietta Daily Journal. Budget Officer Jared named the funds to be covered in the meeting and how they stacked up with other funds. Page 13 of the budget book provided a comparison of FY19 revised and FY20 proposed budgets. A revised FY19 budget number was provided because the comparisons reflect the best number in terms of what we expect to spend for the current year. The FY19 budget is bigger than what we adopted because we have funds and encumbrances that roll over from year to year. We didn't adopt a FY19 budget number of \$100,000,000.00, we adopted something that was very similar to what we're proposing for FY20, actually just over \$92,400,000.00. This shows a decrease against the revised budget but helps to know what we adopted as well. Budget Officer Jered proceeded in explaining a 1.2 percent increase in the General Fund. There was a decrease in Capital Finance funds due to the timing of the 2016

SPLOST, the really moving target is there in what we expected to bring in or spend in any given year, and of course we received a huge contribution from Cobb County for the road project on Windy Hill that was projected for one year but was pushed back a year and is messing with our numbers a little bit.

Council brought up the concern of losing the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Finance Director Kristin Robinson said we were concerned about the local funding we were going to receive and that we will receive \$500,000.00 in CDBG funds for FY19. Projects are submitted, and the City will receive reimbursement. CDBG funds are also used to fund our Ward 5 code enforcement officer.

Based on budgetary assumptions, the millage rate will remain at 8.99, this has been consistent since 2007. Property values have increased for primary residences in Smyrna who have a homestead exemption, but there's no increase on taxes.

Budget Officer Sigmon said, we are expecting an 8.3 percent tax revenue increase over our current year net digest, we arrived on that based on the information provided to us by the Cobb Assessors who report the entire county projecting a 5.54 percent increase. Finance Director Robinson said we get our digest from the County late June, early July, so we'll know our numbers way in advance of department's spending their money. Mayor Max Bacon inquired what the City of Smyrna budgeted for last year's property taxes, Finance Director Robinson said we budgeted \$21,925,000.00 and as of this week the City of Smyrna has collected \$22,430,041.00.

Budget Officer Sigmon said the one-time new and used vehicle purchase Title ad valorem tax is \$742,000.00 and is down from \$768,000.00 due to distribution changes made by the state legislature made in 2018 session effective July of 2019, we're expecting a change in the distribution of these revenues. Budget Officer Sigmon said the impact for us doesn't look great after speaking to a Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) representative and our Cobb County counterparts, Budget Officer Sigmon will keep us updated as the year goes on.

Budget Officer Sigmon said we adopted a budget just under 1.5 million but the allocation from the state came in at 1.6 million that makes our loss even more significant for FY20. Each year in the statute there's change in the percentages allocated to local government. The allocation varies from year to year, so the budget last year was in the city's favor for FY19, so this year we budgeted more conservatively this year. Mayor Bacon commented on the significant losses in the budget for next year. Budget Officer Sigmon said property tax revenue is going up and everything else is down. Mayor Bacon informed the meeting attendees that the number of people to manage has increased.

On the water and sewage fund there's (3) main charges (water, sewage, and the base rate). These charges are independent of each other by historical data, current year-to-date, and the seasonality. The base rate is going down due to residents owning irrigation meters, but next year they'll be charged more based on a larger tier class for conservation water which will give the City an increase in revenue. Finance Director Robinson will run a report on tier base rates and provide it to the Council to reflect this year's decrease due to customers trying to conserve water usage.

Budget Officer Sigmon spoke on the E911 operations budget increase. There was a decrease in hotel/motel revenue due to renovations and a downturn in the number of rooms rented weekend verses by the week for proms and weddings.

Budget Officer Sigmon commented that the water department is proposing a new monthly base rate for fire lines. Budget Officer Sigmon discussed the last storm water increase that took place in January 2018 in the amount of \$.50. The last increase took place two years ago, and if there's an increase in FY20, the amount would change from \$2.95 to \$3.45. This increase would generate over a half year \$100,000.00 in revenue. The increase will run in the newspaper. January will be the deciding date if the Council wants to adopt a storm water fee increase.

FY20 there will several park improvements. Riverview Landing is a new park with expanded amenities; ball park, bike trails, picnic area, restrooms, park signage, coming in FY20.

A capital related item in the FY20 budget will consist of replacing emergency vehicles. Budget Officer Sigmon said we budgeted 1.8 for FY19 and that the budget is down from \$1.8 million to \$1,205,775.00. Some of these funds went towards purchases of a new rescue truck and (2) sanitation trucks. The budget is consistent for the next (5) years. FY2025 we have 3.2 million dollars budgeted and some of this cost over time will cover purchases for a new fire engine, a John Deere tractor, ladders, vacuuming such items as. Each fire engine cost \$550,000.00. Finance Director Robinson said another big increase for 2025 is from a recommendation and ask to change the life of the fire response vehicle engines, (2) rescue vehicles, and the battalion chief car from a fifteen-year replacement schedule to a ten-year replacement schedule. There has been a 35% increase on demand for service in response division than (4) years ago. This is due to the city growing and more visitors coming in. Mayor Bacon plans to take another look at the budget later this month and the plan is to also gain more clarity surround the vehicle replacement budget.

Personnel staffing was covered to discuss hiring of full time and part time personnel. Growing position needs are for the fire staff, IT, detention officers, parks and administration, hiring of a facilities superintendent to oversee the operations of the community center, lifeguard for the Wolfe center, officers for safety issues, and a utility locator. To conserve dollars, some personnel have been increased from part-time to full time employees which alleviates hiring additional staff. The approximate total cost to cover personnel for these positions is \$538,987.00.

Budget schedule includes another discussion at the May 16, 2019 Committee of the Whole meeting, a Public Hearing at the May 20, 2019 Mayor and Council meeting, more discussion at the May 30, 2019 COW meeting and then adoption of budget will occur on June 3, 2019 at the Mayor and Council meeting.

4. Review of the May 6, 2019 Mayor and Council Meeting Agenda

Mayor Max Bacon mentioned the Mayor Education awards held on Monday, May 6 at 5:30p, notice was sent to attendees to hold their remarks to 3 minutes.

City Administrator Saddler Jones said there will be no pre-council meeting held on the evening of May 6th.

Presentation of Police Accreditation by the Georgia Association of the Chiefs of Police. Mayor Bacon inquired if we need someone to maintain this certification full time to keep all the data; one person designated. Chief Lee replied that is correct. Mayor Bacon asked how important it is to have that certification maintained by a full-time person to make sure we meet the deadlines, and if we've ever had a full-time person before. HR Director Kay Bolick said it saved us \$33,000.00 this year off the

City's property liability insurance.

Ms. Tammi Saddler Jones said on Monday, May 6, Mr. Dat Luu will receive the quarterly employee recognition award for the City of Smyrna Award for Ongoing Excellence in Customer Service, and Ms. Andrea Boyes is the recipient for the Jonquil Award for Service Excellence in Action. Police Chief David Lee said Ms. Boyes is the City's certification manager who has been helping Veterans to get money for training; she's helped them get over \$20,000.00 in benefits already this year.

Fire Chief Roy Acree said we have been working on an ordinance to cite residents who continue to burn leaves. There will be a permit to allow burning of clean wood only, not the burning of leaves and trash due to it being a health issue. Chief Acree will give residents an opportunity to respond before issuing a citation if residents do not apply. A statewide burn ban went into effect on Wednesday, May 1, 2019.

A policy law to pass credit card processing fee to customers. Mayor Bacon said this policy will go into effect July 1, 2019. Councilmember Ron Fennel said this would save the city \$100,000.00 a year in fees. Finance Director Robinson stated the fees will depend on the service being purchased and on the bank of the customer. You can pay by auto bank drafts, checks, and online banking to avoid fees on paying a water bill fee.

We recently renewed our annual property liability insurance policy. HR Director Kay Bolick said we shopped and added a million-dollar additional policy for our annual renewal for Cyber security insurance coverage through Towers/Watson/Chubb insurance. GIRMA offers a \$250,000.00 insurance policy as part of our government policy, and they offer additional Cyber insurance coverage. Looking at what happened to Atlanta and the City of Commerce last year we added an additional Cyber insurance to reduce risk.

No other items were added to the agenda.

5. City Administrator Report

HR Director Kay Bolick had nominated the City for Georgia PRIMA Conference Award for a vehicle driving training course. She is very proud of program and we received a nice award plaque. A training film from the City of Smyrna's driving course will be featured in August at the large employer GA PRIMA conference.

City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones spoke on our building official Anthony Carter worked with UGA on a Radon Awareness workshop planned on June 4, 2019 at 6:30pm at the Smyrna Community Center. Attendees can purchase a Radon kit for \$10.00.

Census Day is coming April 1, 2020, we need help to get out into the community to explain how important the Census count is. Federal and State funding is often based on population so the more accurate the numbers, the better. The meeting attendees were asked for names of volunteers and to provide the names to Scott Andrews by May 15, 2019.

Public Works Director Frank Martin spoke on the Gann Road closing May 6, 2019 – September 10, 2019. Gann road currently has digital signs in place to direct detour traffic, but hard signs will be in place on Monday, May 6th. Deadline for completion is 3 weeks after school begins.

Ms. Saddler Jones continued to cover upcoming events such as the Arthur Bacon Golf Tournament, Outdoor Market, Kid Con, and the Youth Council DiverCity event.

Maxwell Ruppensburg showed local artists pieces from Smyrna Art's Council. Mr. Fennel said the picture going up the stairs of the lobby is from a local artist, and it's for sale.

6. New Business

Councilmember Ron Fennel introduced Mr. Louis Wheaton from Ward 7 as a guest attendee. Mr. Wheaton is interested in what the City Council does.

Councilmember Tim Gould reported they raised \$12,000.00 at a golf outing for Campbell High School. Youth Council Diversity will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2019 at Taylor Brawner.

Councilmember Charles "Corkey" Welch reported on the gas station at Lake Street.

City Attorney Scott Cochran stated that there would be a jury trial regarding an old condemnation in the coming week.

7. Adjournment

Mayor Bacon adjourned the May 2, 2019 Committee of the Whole Meeting at 8:20 pm.