

Council Minutes

Budget Workshop

April 17, 2017

Easley City Council met for a budget workshop on Monday, April 17, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall. All members were present, the press was notified. Lisa Chapman, City Clerk served as the recording secretary.

Mayor Bagwell called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and turned the meeting over to City Administrator Stephen Steese. Mr. Steese gave out copies of the power point presentation.

General fund revenues. The property taxes are set to go up to 65 mils. There is an increase in sales tax revenues this would offset the tax increase. The franchise fees are down with the largest decrease from Ft. Hill due to the warm winter. The \$435,000 in transfers is to payback the Stormwater fund. The increase in the Intergovernmental revenue is a new Fire contract that had a 2.5% annual increase.

Mayor Bagwell asked council how they felt about a tax increase in an election year. The ones up for re-election this year stated they felt reluctant to vote for an increase but would it be noticeable. They also commented that it would have to be simplified and explained in order for the public to understand.

The business license bill in the State Legislature did not make it out of committee so it is dead for the year.

Expenditures:

The reason for increase in City Council line item is the City's portion of Council's insurance. The increase in finance is for the new finance director. The Police has asked for the sally port to be built. Fire department needs new heavy duty turn out gear and radios. Finance department asked for a folder/sealer that was taken out of the budget last year. Municipal Court has asked for new chairs for the court room. Public Works needs a new trash truck. Planning and Developments budget for demolition was cut to \$30,000 because of the progress that was made last year. The money in general government is to replace Christmas lights for downtown.

There is a 2% COLA for employees except the Police Department and they have asked that they be on a pay scale based on performance/years of service/education. This was brought before the Police committee and they recommended it go before the full council. There was a lot of discussion about this and some council members didn't feel like it was fair to other city employees in different departments. With retirement going up employees would only net 1.7% COLA.

The TIF fund will e over in 2018. An ordinance to dissolve will have to be approved. The TIF committee gave tentative approval for staff to research the construction of a Farmers market building with remaining funds.

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Hospitality fund is 1.8 mil and a lot of that goes to debt, which could be used for improvements, etc. County Councilman Chris Bowers has agreed to use his recreation funds to renovate the train cars. It cost \$14,000 to move the cars and approximately \$24,000 to renovate. The hospital is going to give \$50,000 to do the wellness stations at Doodle Park. The cars will be sand blasted and painted here, then moved to park for renovations.

Councilman Dykes asked what the \$433,000 in the law enforcement funds was for. Chief Tollison said that is seized assets. Most of it was from Sky's the Limit raid. It has to be used for drug enforcement, equipment, training. It bought one of the new dogs.

Councilman Mann thanked Stephen and the department heads for staying over and their participation in this workshop.

Mayor Bagwell thanked Stephen for his hard work and a good budget.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk