

TOWN COUNCIL  
BUDGET WORK SESSION  
MARCH 24, 2014  
7:00 PM

At a Budget Work Session of the Town Council of the Town of Exmore, Virginia,  
held in the Meeting Room of the J. Guy Lawson Municipal Building, 3305 Main Street, Exmore  
Virginia, on the 24th day of March, 2014, at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Mayor Douglas Greer-Present  
Vice-Mayor Thomas Lewis-Present  
Councilman Charles Ward-Present  
Councilman Charles Massey-Absent  
Councilman Bradley Doughty-Present  
Councilman Bryon Heaster-Present  
Councilman John Metz-Present

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Duer, Ethel Parks, Chief DiMartino, Officer Zieger, Officer Bell, Taylor  
Dukes.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Greer. Mayor Greer established a quorum.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

INVOCATION:

The Invocation was given by Mayor Greer.

REVIEW OF PROPOSED 2015 BUDGET:

Mr. Duer stated that we are required by State Code to present expenses and revenue by April 1 and  
we have met our obligation with this work session.

We need to work on becoming a part of the Tourism Commission. Chincoteague, Onancock and  
Cape Charles are advertised but not Exmore.

Past audits from 2007- 2013 show that the Police Department \$276,000; \$218,000; \$255,000;  
\$290,000; \$341,000; \$206,000 and in 2013 it cost the Town \$64,000 and so far this year they have  
cost us \$5,800 minus. We have only Chief DiMartino to thank for his excellent leadership of the  
department and he is doing a great job financially for the Town. We have 2½ miles of very  
dangerous highway, a lot of stop lights and countless egresses. Many, many traffic tickets written at  
or near reckless driving, three elementary schools, three banks, 275 motel rooms and on any given  
Friday and Saturday night there are close to 900 people in Exmore that we do not know. We need  
police protection. We need to add a sixth officer to have 24/7 protection for our citizens.

Mr. Duer discussed the proposed budget for 2014-2015. The real estate and personal property is  
down slightly from the projected figures for this year, therefore the budgeted revenue is lower.  
Transient Occupancy tax is the same, BPOL is at \$110,000, decals will be billed with property tax,  
meals tax is budgeted lower just to be on the conservative side. We can expect \$356,000 in police  
fines with six officers. The total proposed income is \$1,257,895.

Wastewater income is increased to 140,000 and trash sales remain the same at \$96,500. Enterprise  
fund is at \$521,000. The Firemen's Fund is a pass through and the Byrne Grant is a Police grant for  
\$3,500.

We have applied for a USDA grant to buy a tractor. The tractor is \$28,000 and we will be granted  
\$21,000.

The VML Safety grant for \$2,500 is for safety equipment for Public Works.

The Selective Enforcement for \$8,500 is annual for the Police Department.

State Police Assistance is \$33,456.

We will sell the Tahoe and the gray 2005 Impala.

Net income is \$1,865,447.

The proposed expenditures to name a few, playground equipment, sound equipment and a stage are approximately \$10,000. Doors on the Quonset Hut are approximately \$5,000. A new tractor and implements, salaries with a 2% COLA, new police car payments and lower gasoline bills. Six officers will cost the General Fund approximately \$214 after all their expenses are taken out of their total revenue. Software has been added to Administration to do taxes in the amount of \$18,500. Annual fees are up from last year. Last year it was mis-budgeted. We may need to borrow money or cash in CD's to pay for the new roof. We are looking at close to \$115,000 due to asbestos. Administration salaries will be down even with a 2% COLA. USDA Bonds A & B were on the Balance Sheet but did not show up on the monthly reports last year but we have since moved them so they now show up. Wastewater salaries are up due to hiring a second full time employee. There is one large expense in water and that is a mini excavator needed for water main breaks. Sanitation is up just in case we need to buy more trash cans.

Total Expenditures are \$1,765,000.

That leaves \$101,118 for the wish list.

Property Maintenance Solutions can spray our sidewalks so we do not have to weed eat and take the chance of throwing rocks through a store front window. He also takes care of spraying the Park and around all the Crepe Myrtles. His fee is \$3,650 to maintain the weeds all summer. We are not licensed to spray.

The water meter project, converting all our water meters over to automatic reads over a span of five years, will cost \$51,020 for the first year and then \$32,000 for each year after. This would enable us to read all the meters in Town in about an hour and detect leaks. It will also increase water revenue by 15%-30% or \$7,350 to \$14,700 per year.

The wastewater Plant needs a fence surrounding it to keep trespassers away from the 55,000 gallon holding tank. This could potentially serve as a parking lot to park our trash trucks and trailers. We also could put an office trailer there for Mike and it could serve as a place for all of the Public Works employees to get out of the weather.

If we paint the Quonset Hut we will have to hire a contractor due to new EPA guidelines that require us to hail out every paint chip due to the possibility of lead.

We need new curtains or vertical blinds in the lobby. We are pricing them and should be able to find something for around \$5,000.

We are pricing a building with restrooms for the Park. What we have found so far is in the range of \$55,000-\$57,500.

The Comprehensive Plan is a must and will cost approximately \$12,000.

Mr. Duer noted that there is \$101,000 and asked the Mayor and Council for guidance.

Mr. Duer said that he prepared a budget with five officers also but we will not save significant money. He noted that since we have been down to five officers that crime has increased and accidents have increase. He is asking for six officers. Councilman Ward asked if the revenue would increase with the sixth officer. Vice-Mayor Lewis told him that it is not guaranteed. Chief DiMartino stated that they have collected \$281,000 in fines to date and are looking to collect \$330,000 by the end of the fiscal year which puts them \$50,000 over. He noted that Officer Marshall has written 50 tickets in 3 days. Mr. Duer remarked that the Farmer's Market will require an officers' presence.

Mr. Duer recommended to budget the new water meters on the five year plan, try for the restrooms at the park through a grant and grade the old Center Chevrolet property. Councilman Ward asked Mr. Duer to budget the new water meters. Mr. Duer said he would budget the new water meters and \$10,000 for grading the Center Chevrolet property.

Vice-Mayor Lewis asked Mr. Duer how much the sixth officer would cost the Town. Mr. Duer noted that the sixth officer would cost the Town approximately \$3,000.

Mayor Greer noted that it is a gamble to rely on the revenues of the police fines. He said that he believes they can do it. He noted that two years ago the Council made changes and stopped the overtime that was putting the Town in the hole. He asked the Council if they were willing to bet that the Police Department could write \$356,000 in tickets and if they wanted their town to be a speed trap. Chief DiMartino told Mayor Greer that the overtime numbers were incorrect. Mayor Greer noted that he was not talking just about the Police Department. Vice-Mayor Lewis stated that when officers started leaving the Town they asked Chief DiMartino if he could manage the department with five officers. He said the Chief guaranteed them that he could. Vice-Mayor Lewis said that was the reason they did not hire the sixth and seventh officer and that they need to put the wells and water meters first. He stated that the Police Department does a fine job but the people of this Town need things other than police protection. He feels that a different schedule with the officers they have could give the Town close to the 24/7 protection. Mr. Duer noted that he has spent several hours on a proposed schedule and cannot see any officer staying if they had to work three weekends out of every month. Councilman Heaster noted that from 2009 to 2012, 49% of the budget was the Police Department and that was entirely too high. In 2013 it dropped to 32% and this year it is at 31%. Chief DiMartino said that he had seven officers in 2012 and two of them were in school. He stated that when the percentage was high, he was not in charge, he was only an officer. He said with only five officers, he is working all the time. He comes in to help on weekends when the Sage is operating. They were called to assist the County in Eastville this past weekend and the problem came to Exmore. Chief DiMartino said it is not all about writing tickets. They need to be walking the stores as well. They need to be visible. They just do not have the manpower now. Chief DiMartino said that they did not like the schedule that the Council gave him but if they say do it they will do it. They will have turn over because no one will work 168 hours then come in on their days off and work court and help out with investigations. He said that when they lost Kevin they lost a huge investment. He stated that he and his men are accountable. Vice-Mayor Lewis reiterated that they are doing a fine job but does not feel they need six officers. Mr. Duer stated that you cannot cut the Police Department to pay for the wells and there is no guarantee that everyone will pay their property taxes or other accounts.

Chief DiMartino asked the Mayor and Council to give him the sixth officer and hold him accountable. Vice-Mayor Lewis told Chief DiMartino that in the back room he said he could work the department with five officers if they him \$5,000 more. Chief DiMartino told him that he said he needed six. Chief DiMartino stated that he was threatened with his job at that time and did not have a choice.

Mr. Duer said that he will present the final budget on April 7<sup>th</sup>. He noted that there is a lot going on and we need to get it advertised, have the Public Hearing then approved. Councilman Heaster asked Mr. Duer to prioritize the wish list. Mr. Duer said that the Comprehensive Plan and the meters are the main priorities.

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Douglas Greer, Mayor

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Ethel Parks, Town Clerk