

**TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY
TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 28, 2019**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Saxton called the March 28, 2019, Town Council Workshop Meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Councilmembers Sue Callaway, Jerry Masiello, Jimmy Oliver, Carol Stevenson, Frank Weisgerber, and Mayor Tim Saxton; Town Manager Maureen Hartman; Finance Director Renee McDorman; and Administrative Assistant Pam Smith.

Excused Absence: Councilmember Don Boteler

Mayor Saxton stated that Council should be voting at the Town Council Regular Meetings when more property owners can be in attendance rather than at Workshop Meetings.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

February 28, 2019, Town Council Budget Workshop Meeting: Motion by Councilmember Stevenson, seconded by Councilmember Masiello, to accept the February 28, 2019, Town Council Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes. Motion unanimously carried.

March 8, 2019, Public Meeting on FY 2020 Draft Budget: Motion by Councilmember Callaway, seconded by Councilmember Oliver, to accept the March 8, 2019, Public Meeting on FY 2020 Draft Budget Minutes. Motion unanimously carried.

March 8, 2019, Town Council Regular Meeting: Will be voted on at the April 12, 2019, Town Council Regular Meeting.

March 8, 2019, Town Council Executive Session: Will be voted on at the April 12, 2019, Town Council Regular Meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE ON THE APPROVAL OF A 2019 ELECTION WORKER AND AN ALTERNATE

Margaret Oliver withdrew her position as an Election Worker and Sandy Raymond withdrew her position as an Alternate Election Worker.

Motion by Councilmember Stevenson, seconded by Councilmember Oliver, that Council approve the appointment of Linda Whitney as a 2019 Election Worker and approve the appointment of Peter Bogetti as a 2019 Alternate Election Worker. Motion unanimously carried.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE ON SHARP ENERGY, INC. CONTRACT

Mayor Saxton and the Town Manager reviewed the new Sharp Energy draft lease agreement and took questions and comments from Council and the public.

Motion by Councilmember Stevenson, seconded by Councilmember Masiello, to accept the new Sharp Energy lease agreement. Motion unanimously carried.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE ON ENVIROTECH CONTRACT FOR CANAL MONITORING AND MAINTENANCE

Councilmember Weisgerber discussed the revised version of the Envirotech Proposal/Contract with an effective start date determined by the Town of South Bethany. Councilmember Weisgerber took questions and comments from Council and the public.

Motion by Councilmember Masiello, seconded by Councilmember Weisgerber, to accept the Envirotech proposal. Motion unanimously carried.

DISCUSSION ON DRAFT ORDINANCE REGARDING BONFIRES ON THE BEACH

Councilmember Stevenson reviewed the draft ordinance. Councilmember Stevenson reviewed recommended changes from a local bonfire vendor. Mayor Saxton recommended the end time change from 11 p.m. to 10 p.m. After discussion, Councilmember Stevenson said she will share the recommendations with the Charter and Code Committee for their consideration.

UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF THE COMMERCIAL SIGN ORDINANCE

After contacting several sign companies and consulting with Charter and Code Committee Chair John Fields, Councilmember Callaway has concluded that the Town Code sufficiently addresses electronic/illuminated signs and there is no need to pursue any changes in the Town Code.

DISCUSSION ON PROGRESS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL POLICE COVERAGE

Mayor Saxton reviewed the following:

- The Town has received additional applications and the Town continues to recruit Delaware certified officers.
- One of the Town's Police Academy recruits withdrew from the Academy on day one. The other Police Academy recruit is progressing quite well.
- The police officer from Tennessee begins work with South Bethany on Monday, April 1. The Town is working to get him certified as soon as possible.
- The Town has spoken with the State Police and the three jurisdictions around South Bethany to help provide additional coverage until South Bethany can get people hired/certified. Councilmember Masiello and the Town Manager also met with a representative from Sea Colony's security to get a better understanding of this option.
- The Town will hire two seasonal officers for parking enforcement and to patrol the barricade in Cat Hill. They will report to the Town Manager.

SCHEDULE OF FEES - DISCUSSION OF RESOLUTION 1-19, REVISE SOUTH BETHANY'S SCHEDULE OF FEES

Finance Director Renee McDorman reviewed proposed revisions to the Schedule of Fees. She also reviewed the proposed increases to Parking/Town fines in accordance with Town of South Bethany Code Chapter 94, § 94-8 to be effective May 1, 2019. Mayor Saxton said Council will vote on this at April 12, 2019, Town Council Regular Meeting.

FY2020 DRAFT BUDGET REVIEW

Budget and Finance Committee Member Chris Keefe reviewed the following: 1) Proposed Operating FY 2020 Budget, 2) Total Current Reserves (as of 2/28/19), and 3) FY 2020 Capital Improvement Plan Fund. Ms. Keefe also reviewed how the Budget and Finance Committee estimates future Rental Tax and Realty Transfer Tax revenue.

Ms. Keefe said she would like to see the ARM Reserve replenished annually. Regarding the FY 2020 Capital Improvement Plan Fund, it was noted that the plan spreadsheet shows Unassigned Reserve Balance at zero in FY 2023. Council discussed external funding possibilities as well as tax increases or a one-time tax assessment if needed in the long term. There were no proposed changes to the FY2020 Draft Budget.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Saxton stated that he and Councilmember Masiello met with Chief Crowson and another officer regarding an incident a citizen referred to during the public comment period at the March 8, 2019, Town Council Regular Meeting. Councilmember Masiello clarified that there was a 911 call made at approximately 3:50 a.m. on the date in question. The 911 call went into the Sussex County Communication Center where it was immediately forwarded to a South Bethany police officer who responded to the call within two minutes. A Fenwick Island officer arrived at the house within one minute after the South Bethany officer to provide backup. At the March 8, 2019, Town Council Meeting, the citizen stated that they were asked by the police if they had a gun. Councilmember Masiello stated that nobody was implying that the citizen needed a gun to protect themselves. Councilmember Masiello stated that it is standard operating procedure to ask the resident if they have a weapon because the police want to know where the weapons are to avoid. Mayor Saxton said the South Bethany police officer handled the incident very well.

Brad Gough, 121 Elizabeth Way – Suggested that Councilmember Masiello's statement be made again at the April 12, 2019, Town Council Regular Meeting.

Larry Budd, 4 S. 3rd St. – Stated that he appreciates the time and effort around the budget material. Mr. Budd believes that the Town needs to raise taxes incrementally. He suggested posting the ten-year plan along with the draft budgets to help people understand the budget and the reserves. Mr. Budd asked which towns have said they are willing to provide additional coverage, and is the Town going to pay them. Mayor Saxton said South Bethany is still in discussions with the towns so he will not name them yet, but the Town of South Bethany will pay them for their services. Mr. Budd stated that he supports the bon fires on the beach initiative on a trial basis. He also stated that he appreciates the additional transparency the Town Council has been providing over the past few months.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Masiello, seconded by Councilmember Oliver, to adjourn the March 28, 2019, Town Council Budget Workshop Meeting at 5:25 p.m. Motion unanimously carried.