

**TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY  
TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 22, 2023  
3:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Called to Order**

Mayor Saxton called the February 22, 2023, Town Council Budget Workshop Meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Attendance and Absences**

In attendance were Mayor Tim Saxton and Councilmembers Derek Abbott, Randall Bartholomew, Bob Biciocchi, Edie Dondero, Dick Oliver, Tim Shaw; and Town Manager Maureen Hartman, Town Finance Director Renee McDorman, and Chief Jason Lovins. Public attendee: 1.

**Public Comment**

There were no comments.

**Adoption of December 9, 2022, meeting minutes**

Councilman Tim Shaw motioned to approve the December 9, 2022, Town Council meeting minutes as presented. Councilman Bob Biciocchi seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0-1 abstention (Abbott).

**Discussion and possible Action on proposed revised FY2024 Police Department Pay Scale**

Mayor Saxton stated the reason he wanted this item voted on outside of the budget is because it has to do with a pay scale, and Chief Lovins and Town Manager Maureen Hartman are requesting the whole pay scale moves up by three percent (3%). Councilman Randy Bartholomew motioned to approve the proposed revised FY2024 Police Department Pay Scale. Councilman Shaw seconded the motion. Councilman Derek Abbott asked Chief Lovins if this increase would be sufficiently competitive enough to entice new recruits. Chief Lovins stated yes. Motion carried 7-0.

**FY 2024 Draft Budget Review, with discussion and possible action on a line item proposed for the FY 2024 budget**

Councilman Bartholomew presented the FY2024 draft budget with the assistance of the Finance Director Renee McDorman and Town Manager Hartman. Councilman Bartholomew stated he would like to thank the staff and the Budget & Finance Committee (B&F) for their work on this first draft. Councilman Dick Oliver stated he thinks Council should be looking at a very gradual tax increase such as one percent (1%) a year for ten (10) years. Councilwoman Dondero stated she suggested to Councilman Bartholomew and the B&F to include money in this year's budget to hire a professional planning consultant company to take the lead on drafting the Town comprehensive plan, with a significant amount of community input via public meetings, workshops, etc., rather than simply distributing a survey.

Councilman Bartholomew stated there is an entry for grant expenses equaling fifty-thousand dollars (\$50,000.00), and he wanted to know how much of an amount should be placed into the budget for such possible expenditures such as grant matching. Mayor Saxton stated he would like to see a fifty-thousand-dollar (\$50,000.00) matching grant expense. Council agreed the amount could be changed via a budget amendment, but they're fine with what is currently presented. Mayor Saxton asked Councilwoman Dondero how much she would like to budget for a consultant for the comprehensive plan. Councilman Dondero stated forty-thousand dollars (\$40,000.00) for this upcoming fiscal year and forty-thousand dollars (\$40,000.00) for the following fiscal year.

Councilman Bartholomew stated there is a new line item in the public safety department of five-thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) for community safety programs, such as bicycle safety events.

Councilman Abbott suggested keeping the minimal amount needed for community safety programs, such as \$1,000.00, and placing the rest toward the contingency fund. Councilman Bartholomew suggested adding a contingency line item of ten-thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) for beach patrol to help, if needed, for hiring/beach access equipment. Council agreed. Councilman Shaw stated, regarding Canal Water Quality (CWQ), there was a line item added for the fifty-thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) the Town may spend with Solitude for them to come here twice to clean up the canals. Councilman Shaw stated the ten-thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) is for continuing year-long canal maintenance. Councilwoman Dondero suggested increasing the donation funds to six-thousand dollars (\$6,000.00). Council agreed.

Councilman Bartholomew stated the capital budget has \$132,300.00. Councilman Abbott stated he noticed the line item in there for police patrol vehicles is \$88,000.00 but if you look back at the ARM budget, it looks like the Town is buying cars every three (3) years; and is that the right interval to purchase vehicles or is the Town better off staggering purchases? Chief Lovins stated getting two (2) vehicles every three (3) years. Councilman Bartholomew stated the next item is the municipal street aid (MSA), anticipating \$55,000.00 of grant income and the Town spending \$55,000.00 on the roads. Councilman Bartholomew stated going back to revenue, the total impact on his tally to expenses is an additional expense of \$52,000.00. Mayor Saxton stated he would like to have a balanced operating budget, taking monies out of capital and "feed the capital into the reserves" over what the Town makes, and the Town needs to keep the ARM fully funded. Councilman Bartholomew stated he strongly feels the Town needs to fund the ARM; and if the Town has a balanced budget and we exceed the budget up to these amounts, then that is the money, the operating surplus, the Town could feed it. Councilman Biciocchi asked to increase the cost of residential parking permit fees and reducing the allowed amount of parking permits per residence from four (4) to two (2) due to beach parking congestion. Mayor Saxton and Councilman Abbott stated their agreement with reducing the number of permits distributed per residence. Mayor Saxton stated the Town should also discuss lowering the allowed amount of parking passes distributed to contractors, which currently stands at five (5). Town Manager Hartman stated in order to get the process started for buying the police vehicles, the Town needs to submit a letter of intent. Council agreed to send the letter.

**Adjournment**

Motion by Councilman Abbott, seconded by Councilwoman Dondero to adjourn the February 22, 2023, Town Council Workshop meeting at 5:12 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Clerk

  
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Date of Approval