

Mount Pleasant

North Carolina

Founded in 1848

**Town of Mt. Pleasant
Board of Commissioners
Budget Workshop Meeting
Town Hall- Conference Room
Saturday, March 7, 2020 at 8:00 A.M.**

Attendance: Mayor Del Eudy
Mayor Pro-Tem/Commissioner Lori Furr
Commissioner Jim Sells
Commissioner William Meadows
Commissioner Steve Ashby
Commissioner Justin Simpson
Town Administrator Randy Holloway
Town Clerk Amy Schueneman

Also Present: Crystal Smith, Justin Stallings, Jerry Taylor, Jeff Watts, Erin Burris, and Kenneth Black.

Mayor Eudy called the meeting to order and welcomed those attending.

Mayor Eudy then turned the meeting over to Randy Holloway, Town Administrator, and Crystal Smith, Assistant Town Administrator, to present the Power Point presentation for the FY2020/2021 Budget Workshop.

****Attached to the Minutes of the Budget Workshop in the Minute Book is a copy of the Power Point presentation.****

Each slide was presented with additional comments listed by page below.

Page 3- Town currently has \$19,000,000 in outstanding projects that need to be done. Staff is meeting with the Economic Development Commission on Wednesday, March 11th to discuss the Foil property and potential uses if it comes to market.

Page 4- The County has a 98.5% collection rate for property taxes. The Town has been conservative with a 96% collection rate when estimating tax revenue for the year. Next year the Town will use a 97% collection rate to allow for more funds to be available. The Fire Capital Reserve fund of \$66,942 will have \$58,000 deducted when the Chief's cars arrive. The Fire Capital Project Fund will receive \$100,000 from the State once their budget is adopted.

Page 7- Crystal Smith presented the Recreational/ Events section. Farmer's Market has continually had poor attendance by Vendors and customers. Board agreed it has been poorly attended and it will be ok to let it drop and use the \$400 budgeted elsewhere. The Town Board agreed to tie in the I Love My City event with the downtown merchants to have a big event in the Spring. Randy Holloway said it would be good for the Town and not put a lot of extra work on the Staff.

8590 Park Drive : P.O. Box 787 : Mount Pleasant, North Carolina 28124 : tel. 704.436.9803 : fax 704.436.2921

Last year's Fall Festival was highly attended with over 2,000 people

For the Independence Celebration it was suggested by East Coast Fireworks to use low velocity (does not shoot in the air as far) fireworks to be closer to the event. This would bring people into the event area instead of watching away from Town Hall. It may cause people to get upset for not seeing them the first year. Meeting with a representative at 2:30pm on Wednesday, March 11th.

Page 8- Justin Stallings, Public Works Supervisor, advised the Town of the need to grind up all the limbs, brush, and stumps at Public Works. Once the current brush is ground up, it would be easy to get a horizontal grinder at Public Works on a quarterly basis to keep it cleaned up and provide free mulch to the Town.

Currently, the Town is losing water through the system. A group is coming in the end of March to evaluate the situation. It might be the connection to Concord. Normal water loss is between 10-15%. We are exceeding 30% now.

There is a meeting scheduled this week with a contractor to discuss a contract for repairing manholes. There are not as many lids needed as first thought. May be able to speed up the manhole repairs.

Page 9- Kenny Black said the liner for the lagoon at the Water Treatment facility is from the 1980's and will be a big ticket item (approximately \$500,000). He would like to coat the liner to extend the life.

The Black Run Reservoir is only used 3-5 times a year and was built by the mills in town to have water at the plants during a drought.

Page 11- Erin Burris presented an updated Comprehensive Plan to the Board.

The Comprehensive Plan Update Power Point is included in the Minute Book at the end of the Town Staff Power Point.

- All strategies are and should be related to the Town Vision Statement.
- Based on Public Input biggest thing is to remain small.
- Per capita we have more restaurants than anywhere else in the county.
- CC4-The Historic District study is old and needs to be redone to allow owners to get state and federal tax considerations up to 40% back. This would apply to the old theatre building. The study will be completed in 2 phases: the first from money in this year's budget and the second in next year's budget.
- CC5-need to strengthen language of Façade Grant.
- CC6-Entrance sign will be on the Agenda March 9, 2020
- ED1- Once the Town decides on a "brand" we need to get it trademarked.
- ED2-ECHS has helped the Town with anything Staff or community has asked concerning history of the Town.
- ED5-Since 2017, 25 new businesses have opened.
- ED6- MPHS is going to focus on the trade industry including electrical.
- Future Land Use Map- this map doesn't show current annexations approved by the Town.
- LU1-EBC, Inc property at Hwy 49/73 wants to be rezoned to Medium Intensity.
- LU3-Currently 25 units are in waiting for infill development (9 houses on N. College & 16 Townhouses on S Skyland)
- LU4- There is a rezoning application that will be on the P&Z Board agenda April 27th

- DT1- There have been verbal commitments from business owners to agree to improved parking lot plan.
- DT2- A Budget Amendment to pay for the Duke Energy study of downtown power lines will be on the March 9th agenda.
- Athletic Programming & recreational amenities need to be worked out with Cabarrus County. They have stated they will not help facilitate youth sports.
- Discussion of how much better traffic is with the detour of the Mt. Pleasant South bridge. Logging trucks are not using downtown to reach their destination. It would be nice to keep it that way. When the bridge is replaced, Erin Burris hopes NC DOT will consider the bike/pedestrian standards we would like to implement. Does not expect that to happen since it would prolong the design process.
- PR6- Parking will be a major issue once construction begins at the former MPMS site. Parents still use the parking lots for games and practices. Parents will have nowhere to go.
- PR1 Map-Thread Trail would be happy to have ballfields there if the new Cabarrus County Board is on board with it. Still waiting on Cabarrus County to fulfill their promise to replace the ballfields at North Drive.
- IS6- Fire Chief Jerry Taylor would like to build the satellite station on Walker Road with collaboration from the County to add EMS Station. After that station is built, Fire Dept. could move trucks to that location and renovate the current station on N. Main St. The back of the bay could then be used for sleeping area.
- Board discussed allocating the ABC Profit Distribution to Fire, Transportation, and Cultural & Recreation. They did not feel comfortable setting a percentage to each. Would rather assign based on project or need. Discussion only.
- Erin Burris would like to set up two types of funds for donations and estate planning for Cultural & Recreation and Downtown improvements. It would be a non-taxable donation for donors.

Page 12- Project B is the ECB, Inc property at the corner of HWY49/73. If Niblock Homes does build it out the projected tax value could increase from \$57,500,000 to \$76,000,000 which would be half of the current tax revenue.

Page 14- Amy Schueneman stated that Town still owes \$166,854 for current loan payments this year.

Page 18-Lynn Whittington from USDA is coming to Town Hall for a meeting on March 16, 2020 to discuss a loan for a Waterline extension and new Empire Dr. Pump Station. Once current loans are paid off, Town should be able to make payments for these two new projects.

Pages 20-22- Randy Holloway discussed replacing the N. Main St. waterline and adding a new pump station at Empire Dr. The 6" waterline is from the 1930's and needs to be increased to a minimum of 12' line. This will improve water quality and pressure for fire prevention. The Empire Dr. pump station and extension will relieve Summer St. and eliminate the Food Lion and Meadowbrook Pump Stations. It would also allow sewer lines for the EBC, Inc property on Hwy 49/73.

A loan from USDA for 40 years at 2.75% is a great rate for the Town and will likely go down before we are ready to apply. The loan can also be paid off early without penalties. The remaining unused amount currently in the budget for debt service could be budgeted each year and put in a Capital Reserve account for future projects, then the money is already earmarked each budget year.

For the N. Main St. waterline, the Town is trying to coordinate with NC DOT, Duke Energy, Windstream, and Spectrum about burying lines and the bike/pedestrian plan.

The Board had a consensus to move forward with obtaining loans from USDA to do these projects.

Page 26-The Board would like to see more street lights in addition to the ones added at the square since there are still many dark spots.

Page 27- The Town entrance sign may be higher than the estimated \$25,000. Could go to \$35,000. The cost would come out of General Fund Fund Balance. This would need to be approved by the Town Board once a preliminary design is approved. Cost for preliminary work and contract will be on March 9th agenda for the Board to approve.

Page 28- The Town signed a new 4 year contract with Cabarrus County Sheriff's Dept. this fiscal year. However, Randy Holloway met with the County and Sheriff's Dept. last week and they want to increase the amount for 2 Deputies from \$160,788 that we are currently paying to \$210,000 FY2020-2021 and then to \$310,000 for FY2021-2022. This would require the Town to put all the extra Tax Revenue from the 15.5% property tax reevaluation to the Sheriff's Dept. They are also adding a 10% administrative charge (approximately \$21,000) for 4 billings and the processing of the checks the Town mails in.

Randy Holloway had 3 possible outcomes:

1. Cabarrus County and the Town honor the remaining 3 years on the current contract.
2. The Town uses only one Deputy for a Community Officer to work Monday-Friday 8am-5pm for \$76,000 a year. Deputy would need to walk downtown, visit each merchant weekly, and come into Town Hall on a daily basis.
3. Cancel the contract and the County still must answer calls within the Town at no cost to the tax payers.

The Board asked many questions and discussed the options.

Page 29- Fire Chief Jerry Taylor stated he was losing quality Firefighters because they can make a lot more money at other stations. Sometimes there are not even 3 on duty. Current pay range is \$10-\$13.50. The Town pays \$11.25 at this time.

A copy of Rural Fire Dept. Salaries in Cabarrus County is included in the Minute Book.

Page 38- Downtown Association currently meets each quarter. Next meeting is April 25.

Cabarrus County would like to split the cost 50/50 to add an EMS station at Walker Road when the Fire Dept. builds the satellite site. They would like to do this sooner than later.

WSACC is implementing a 2.4% increase to our sewer rate next year. This would be a direct pass through to the customers which would equal \$1.59 added to the base rate.


A copy of the proposed water/sewer rates for Fiscal year 2020-2021 is included in the Minute Book.

ADJOURNMENT

After finishing the Power Point, Mayor Eudy thanked the Town Staff for their hard work and closed the meeting.

By our signatures the following minutes were approved as submitted and amended on Monday, April 13, 2020 in the Regular Meeting.


Town Clerk Amy Schueneman


Mayor W. Del Eudy

