

TOWN OF SHARPSBURG

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
A & O Bridges Community Center
105 Main Street, Sharpsburg GA

December 12, 2022

MINUTES

6:00PM

Call Council Meeting to Order

Mayor Cole called the December 12, 2022 Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Cole led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Establish Quorum

Town Administrator Floyd Jones stated there was a quorum present.

Those Present: Blue Cole- Mayor, Standley D. Parten- Post 1 and Tom Teagle- Post 3

Those Not Present: Alexander Edge- Post 2 and Elizabeth Good- Post 4

Proclamations

There were no Proclamations.

Review/Approval of Minutes:

1. November 4, 2022, Minutes

Council reviewed the November 4, 2022 Minutes.

Councilmember Parten moved to approve the November 4, 2022 Minutes. Councilmember Teagle seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0-2 with Councilmembers Edge and Good not present.

Public Hearing:

1. First Reading- Fiscal Year 2023 Budget

Town Administrator Jones and Mayor Cole went over the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 Budget with Council.

Mayor Cole stated that this budget represents an approximate 15% increase from the Fiscal Year 2022 budget. He stated that a couple of positions would be upgraded by title and position, and that the duties for the Librarian / Community Center Coordinator would be split so that one person would be a dedicated Librarian and another person would be a dedicated Community Center Coordinator.

Town Administrator Jones stated that the proposed budget would provide a raise to the Deputy Clerk position and would change the title of the position to Deputy Administrator.

Mayor Cole stated that the proposed budget increases the funds for educational and training purposes. He added that the budget also provides funds for purchasing new tables and chairs for the Community Center. He added that the Council will need to consider how to surplus the current tables and chairs.

Town Administrator Jones stated that Code Enforcement and Municipal Court Services were previously budgeted for \$500 each, however, this budget increases both line items to \$2,000. He stated he is working on quotes with Safebuilt for active code enforcement and those quotes may have an impact on the budget. He reiterated that the budget is enhanced to provide for more educational and certifications purposes. He stated that the Dues and Fees line item has increased since over the past years the fees exceed approved budget. He explained the Repairs and Maintenance line item is significantly increased since Council approved extensive repairs to the Community Center and Library- and that work is occurring currently. Mr. Jones stated that the budget was reduced since currently there are no employee benefits being provided. He added that the budget was reduced for Legal Services, however, sufficient money has been budgeted to provide legal services with the anticipated codification of the town's ordinances. The line item for Accounting Fees has been reduced based on previous years' expenses. Mr. Jones stated that Lawn Care and Right of Way Expenses have been restored to the budget and the budgets are based off payments made in Fiscal Year 2021- albeit these costs might rise in 2021. Mr. Jones stated that the town did not touch its Contingency Funds in Fiscal Year 2022, and the proposed budget significantly raises the available Contingency Funds- providing a cushion as needed.

Mayor Cole stated the proposed budget also sets the stage for paying the mayor from \$100 to \$1,000 a month. He stated that the mayor can spend up to 35 hours a week on town matters. He stated his request is not for this Fiscal Year- although it is budgeted to set the stage for future mayors beginning in Fiscal Year 2024. He said this raise in pay helps to alleviate the burden of families who see mayors working a lot with little return. He added that if more is paid more can be expected. Mayor Cole stated he could not spend or allocate a raise for himself in Fiscal Year 2023, but the budget reflects available funds for that purpose in preparation for Fiscal Year 2024. Attorney Sears added that the mayor's pay could not be raised until Fiscal Year 2024. Councilmember Teagle added that the annual pay at \$1,000 a month is \$12,000- and he noted that while the pay is not much would help bring monetary incentive to the position. Mayor Cole stated that the original pay of \$100 a month was to provide reimbursement for mayoral expenses.

Attorney Sears added that there will be Elections costs that are not yet budgeted, and that the costs will be reimbursed by the county. Mr. Jones stated he would get with Coweta Elections to determine what those costs would be. Mr. Sears stated that the Election could cost up to \$6,000 but if Coweta calls for a SPLOST Election in November, then the cost may reduce significantly since the town would only pay for the ballots- meaning the cost for the Election could vary based on the type of Election that is being held. Attorney Sears added that if the salary is going to be raised then the work would need to be done soon- certainly before qualifying. Attorney Sears stated that changing the salary is a charter change that includes advertising and two public hearings.

It was mentioned that the town would be looking into increasing its holiday decorations and potentially hiring a professional company to put up and take down Christmas lights. Councilmember Teagle asked if the budget would support bringing in a large garbage container to help residents with their trash.

Mr. Jones stated that each year since its inception the SPLOST 2019 budget has been set at \$57,000 even though each year the town received much more than budgeted. He mentioned there had been questions about whether the SPLOST budget could be raised to and asked Attorney Sears for clarity. Mr. Sears stated that the town can set its budget but that the town is obligated to spend SPLOST funds on specific, designated purposes. Discussion was held on budgeting philosophy. Mr. Jones stated there would be a lot of expenses paid out of SPLOST this year, and he anticipated there will be a point in Fiscal Year 2023 where the SPLOST funds will be expended to pay for the parking lot and the demolition of Beckom House.

Mayor Cole opened the floor for Public Hearing for the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget.

Polly Garlington stated that while it may not be feasible this year, it would benefit the town to provide some benefits to its employees- particularly health insurance- to retain employees. It was agreed this is a hard problem to solve due to the fact that the town has only one full-time employee and it would need at least two full-time employees to bring in benefits. It was agreed that this matter may be better considered for the Fiscal Year 2024 budget.

Mayor Cole closed the Public Hearing of the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget.

Town Administrator Jones reminded Council that the budget would be on the January 9, 2023, Agenda for formal adoption and any changes or concerns regarding the budget should be provided to him prior to that meeting.

Council did not vote on the budget or on any matter related to the budget.

New Business:

1. November 2022 Budget Review

Town Administrator Floyd Jones briefed the Board on the November 2022 end-of-month budget and concluded that the budget was sound. He spoke about specific line items and mentioned that the Repairs and Maintenance budget was over-expended but it was accounted for in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget and the expenses were approved by Council.

Council did not vote on this matter.

Old Business:

1. 39 Main Street Update

Mayor Cole stated he and Councilmember Parten spoke to the Beckom family and updated them on the findings. He stated that the town will provide quotes and bids to the Council to demolish the house. He added that a decision will have to be made on what to do with the area. He added he wanted to save the well and use it for irrigation purposes, and he had other improvements in mind for the area that can be discussed.

Council did not vote on this matter.

2. Back Parking Lot Update

Mayor Cole stated that the work on the back parking lot is finishing up. He stated that fencing will be coming in between the parking lot and Arbor Valley and he is still waiting on quotes for decorative fencing. He said striping of the back parking lot still needs to be done and that river stone will be added. He added that some topping off and sodding will need to be done in the coming months. He stated that the county is looking into whether they have a contractor who can set up the light poles in the back of the parking lot. He hoped the work would be completed by the end of the year, but he did not have a schedule on when the work would be completed. Councilmember Teagle mentioned that chairs of some kind may need to be placed at or around the walk path- even if on a temporary basis. Mayor Cole added that the county will be installing the rock for the back parking lot.

Council did not vote on this matter.

Public Comments:

No one spoke during Public Comment.

Polling of Council:

Councilmember Teagle: Councilmember Teagle stated there were some lines that were some potential electrical lines that were drooping low. Town Administrator Jones replied that he had already called Georgia Power to have them investigate those lines.

Administrator's Minutes:

Fiscal Year 2023 Budget: Town Administrator Jones emphasized that any concerns or changes to the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 budget would need to be communicated prior to January 9, 2023.

Schedule Based on the Upcoming Holidays: Town Administrator Jones requested Council to formally authorize staff to take Monday, December 26, 2022, and Monday, January 2, 2023 off for their respective holidays. He further asked Council to authorize the Town Hall to work on half-day schedules for the week between Christmas and New Year's. The Council agreed to the request but did not take a formal vote on the matter.

LMIG Funds: Town Administrator Jones reminded the Board that there are LMIG funds that will need to be spent and that another discussion would need to be held on the matter to provide direction on how to proceed.

Squirrels at the Library: Town Administrator Jones reported he had received quotes to remove the squirrels from the library. He reminded Council he had received authorization not to spend more than \$1,000. He stated that two of the quotes would fall under the spending authorization, but one of the quotes left him with questions that were unanswered. He stated that he was seeking clarity on the one quote and would be deciding soon.

Mayor's Updates:

Mayor Cole stated he had no additional updates since his issues had already been discussed throughout the course of the meeting.

Executive Session:

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment:

Councilmember Teagle moved to adjourn the December 12, 2022 Council meeting. Councilmember Parten seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The December 12, 2022 Council meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Floyd L. Jones, Town Administrator

Blue Cole, Mayor

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Sharpsburg Town Council, in Sharpsburg, Georgia, on the ninth day of January 2023.

Floyd L. Jones, Town Administrator