

Town of Marshville
Special Meeting – Budget Planning Retreat
Thursday, March 8, 2012
8:00 am
Marshville Community Center – 118 E. Union St.

Present: Mayor Frank Deese, MPT Matthew Jefferson, CM Margaret Bivens, CM Dora Bridget, CM Norma Carpenter, CM Gary Huntley, ITM James Bennett and Clerk/FO Tonya Johnson. Also present was DPW Bivens Steele.

Mayor Deese called to order the special meeting of the Marshville Town Council for the purpose of a budget planning retreat at 8:14 am.

The meeting began with DPW Bivens Steele giving a preliminary budget presentation for the water and sewer departments for FY2012-2013. DPW Steele reported to council that the biggest budget requests are in capital improvements. In the water department a new booster pump is budgeted for at an estimated \$70,000. DPW Steele reported this project has been put off for years. The booster pump is in bad condition and needs to be updated. Also, a position has been added for an Asst. Superintendent. The hope is to find a person with water and sewer certifications. DPW Steele commented that we currently don't have anyone that can be promoted. The position will be funded out of the 10-5000 dept. (Public Buildings). Mayor Deese commented that it may be good to incentivize employees to get their GED. CM Bivens agreed that we need someone certified in water and sewer.

ITM Bennett mentioned that the town currently pays a fee for customers that pay by credit card. This fee is not passed on to the customer. Some discussion ensued and F/O Tonya Johnson was asked to check the contract and whether or not charges can be passed on to the customer.

DPW Steele stated that Marshville's average water use is 250,000 gallons per day.

DPW Steele commented that \$10,000 has been put in the budget for engineering in anticipation of the Monroe Bypass. CM Dora Bridget asked about the condition of the water lines in Marshville. DPW Steele stated that about half of the lines are in good condition and half in need of repair/replacement. He further commented that the water line that runs in the middle of Hwy. 74 is the worst nightmare.

ITM James Bennett stated that a 2% cola increase is being budgeted for in all departments.

DPW Steele informed council that James Clyburn was originally coded to dept. 10-5000 (Public Buildings). Since becoming a fulltime employee he is paid out of the sewer department (30-8290). This department also includes Bobby Hardy and Freddie Rollins. The water department consists of Bivens Steele, Debra Steele and Debra Leigh. DPW Steele went on to report that the sewer department includes cost for a new pump station on Elaine Street at an estimated cost of \$74,000. He is proposing a manhole pump as the current one poses safety issues.

ITM Bennett commented that less money is being requested in this year's budget than in the current year. Mayor Deese commented that we don't want to get halfway through the budget year and be forced to do budget amendments.

DPW Steele stated that 200,000 gallons per day is the town's average amount of sewage. Approximately 110,000 gallons per day is sent to Union Co. and 90,000 gallons per day is sent to Anson Co. Discussion ensued regarding the contract issue with Union Co. Mayor Deese suggested that he, Bivens and James get together regarding the contract with Union Co. CM Dora Bridget asked why Marshville can't send everything to Anson Co. DPW Steele replied that it is cheaper to send to Union Co. than Anson Co. It would cost major money to cut off Union Co. and send everything to Anson Co. Mayor Deese commented that we need to move forward with both Anson and Union counties.

DPW Bivens Steele reported on sidewalks. He stated that the engineering is almost complete on the Hwy. 74 sidewalk project. He projects it would cost an estimated \$9,000 to create a sidewalk connection from the library to the post office. DWP Steele is budgeting \$10,000 in dept. 5600 – Streets, for sidewalk projects. Also, \$70,000 is proposed to be budgeted for in dept. 5700 – Powell, for contracted services. Powell Bill funds can be used to pay for sidewalks. MPT Jefferson stated that the town's crosswalks need to be improved to meet the criteria for the Small Town Main Street Program. He mentioned that signage also needs to be considered. DPW Steele stated that will likely have to go by state guidelines regarding signage.

PD Alan Thifault presented to council budget requests for parks and recreation. He told council that the town currently employs two certified exercise instructors. PD Thifault informed council that he serves as liaison for the Union Co. P & R dept. He also maintains a good working relationship with the schools' athletic directors. He is currently working on an Urban Forestry Grant. PD Thifault explained he tries to keep fees low to boost participation in the various programs. He mentioned that the exercise class fee will be increasing slightly so that the town doesn't subsidize the program. PD Thifault is currently working on a soccer club for the Town of Marshville. He would like to set a monthly schedule for outdoor concerts in the downtown area. Beginning in April he will publish in the local paper a column entitled "Marshville Happenings" to inform the public of events. ITM Bennett stated that he is proposing a \$2,000 salary increase for PD Alan Thifault due to his taking on the responsibility of nuisance control pertaining to tall grass.

ITM James Bennett reviewed the proposed budget for dept. 4200 – Administration. He informed council that \$7,200 has been budgeted for a Salary Survey and Pay Classification Study, revising the Personnel Policy and redesigning the website. ITM Bennett commented that the salary survey is an important tool to allow us to be competitive and keep good employees. ITM Bennett also increased the line item for training.

The meeting was recessed for a break at 10:01 am.
The meeting reconvened at 10:16 am.

Council projects were discussed at this time. ITM Bennett stated that the Planning Board wants to request funding in the amount of \$5,000 to \$6,000 to develop a corridor plan. Planning Board member Susan Drake was present and was asked to comment. She informed council that the Planning Board is currently working to update the Land Use Plan. Diane Dil has been asked to look at plans for other towns our size in an effort to compare apples to apples.

MPT Matthew Jefferson asked how we're going to fund the functions of the Small Town Main Street committee. He suggested we look into some sort of incentivizing, whether through obtaining grant dollars or appropriating funds. MPT Jefferson commented that the museum needs some start up funding. He suggested a Christmas grant to aid owners of downtown storefronts to decorate. MPT Jefferson's wish list included budgeting for signage and a web page. He also wants to continue to budget for the Veterans Day event. MPT Jefferson suggested that the Community Center be turned into a show piece with a pocket park.

CM Margaret Bivens requested \$2,000 for the Beautification Committee to carry out some of its projects. She would also like for the town to consider purchasing the B.C. Moore's building as well as creating an historic district downtown.

CM Norma Carpenter requested \$1,000 for the Museum Committee start up expense. She commented they are trying to raise funds. CM Carpenter also expressed her desire to see more sidewalks, to improve connectivity.

CM Gary Huntley conveyed to council that sewer system upgrades should be a priority. He feels sidewalks are also important. He would like to see a logo developed for the town. CM Huntley also suggested the town organize a Seed Harvest Walk that would involve civic organizations. This would bring citizens together and also assist in cleaning up the town.

CM Norma Carpenter added that public awareness and communication are vital.

CM Dora Bridget conveyed that she would like to see a good town seal developed. She would like to see the area behind the B.C. Moore's building developed. Finally, CM Bridget expressed the need for the town's sidewalks to be handicap accessible.

Mayor Deese commented that in 2005-2006 he brought up the idea for a recreation/wellness center study. He would like to see this type of facility located beside Autumn Care. The property owner may consider selling the land to the Town of Marshville. He has spoken with some citizens who have the financial means to help. He has talked with hospitals and they may be interested in a facility such as this. Mr. Randy Gore feels that loan and/or grant money may be available to make this a reality. Mayor Deese stated he hopes, in the near future, to bring a proposal to council. He added that there will need to be a feasibility study performed and architectural drawings.

Mayor Deese also stated that sewer capacity is a priority.

ITM James Bennett informed council that a private citizen may be interested in helping turn the old First Baptist Church into a theater. Mr. Randy Gore looked at the building while he was in town. A feasibility study would need to be performed. CM Norma Carpenter commented that the church is a maintenance nightmare. Mayor Deese commented that we need to think outside the box and, at the same time, be cognizant of how we spend taxpayer money. Mayor Deese stated he would like to budget \$5,000 to engage the Buxton Company to come and look at what is suited for Marshville as it pertains to commercial businesses.

Chief Carl Webber presented to council budget requests for the police department. In the way of information Chief Webber informed council that an arrest had just been made in very recent murder case. Regarding the police department budget Chief Webber explained that there had been very little involvement from the police dept. in the current year's budget (2011-2012) due to personnel changes within the department during the year. The proposed budget includes a 2% cola increase. Also, a 10% provision for overtime is built into the budget. Chief Webber explained that the budget includes costs for two police cars, new radios, guns/holsters for the department and a wireless connection between the PD and Town Hall.

DPW Bivens Steele reported to council on proposed building upgrades which include the estimated cost of \$9,000 for a new HVAC system at Town Hall. The existing unit has been worked on repeatedly.

The meeting recessed for lunch.

The meeting reconvened at 1:05 pm

ITM James Bennett reviewed the proposed budget draft with council. He commented that some revenues cannot be accurately projected at this time as state projected revenues estimates have not yet been received. This information is provided by the NCLM. ITM Bennett did convey to council that Powell Bill funds are expected to decrease.

ITM Bennett commented on a proposed fee increase in privilege license tax for internet cafes. Mayor Deese recommended checking into lawsuits in other towns regarding imposing internet café fees to make sure we are covered legally. He stated if we charge per machine we need to have good justification for the fee increase.

ITM Bennett informed council that our contract with Waste Connections for garbage service will decrease and will also include recyclables. Mayor Deese commented that we may need to make people aware they will be getting more service for the same money.

ITM Bennett mentioned the following proposed changes in the budget for FY2012-2013:

PD Alan Thifault will be selling concessions during ball tournaments.

Pay for elected officials are proposed to increase to \$600/qtr. for the mayor and \$425/qtr. for council members.

Increases are proposed for board member training and travel.

A 2% cola increase is proposed for all employees in all departments.

Other items discussed were to consider more appropriate employee awards for employees with fifteen to twenty years or more of service. Town of Marshville currently gives a pin. It was also suggested that we put money in the budget to donate Christmas lights to all downtown merchants. Crosswalk painting was discussed as well as signage around town.

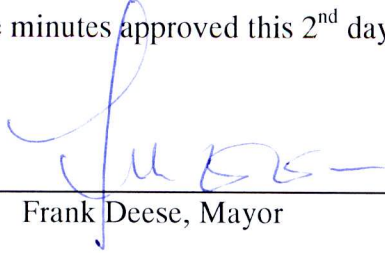
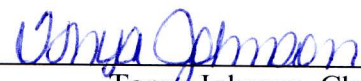
Mayor Deese inquired of ITM Bennett as to when the first draft of the FY2012-2013 budget would be ready. ITM Bennett replied that the budget draft would be ready at the March 19th council meeting.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by CM Gary Huntley and seconded by CM Margaret Bivens.
Vote: All ayes.

There being no further comments the meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.

These minutes approved this 2nd day of April, 2012.

BY:  ATTEST: 
Frank Deese, Mayor Tonya Johnson, Clerk

**A brief recess may be called every 45-60 minutes, as desired by Council.*

