

**MINUTES OF A BUDGET WORK SESSION AND A SPECIAL CALLED MEETING HELD ON JUNE 1, 2011, AT 4:30 P.M., IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE VINTON MUNICIPAL BUILDING LOCATED AT 311 SOUTH POLLARD STREET, VINTON, VA**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Bradley E. Grose, Mayor  
Robert R. Altice  
Carolyn D. Fidler, Vice Mayor  
Matthew S. Hare  
W. Wesley Nance**

Mr. Lawrence advised that during the work session, he would summarize all changes resulting from Council direction, staff/council discussions and staff solutions as well as to provide additional information regarding the Police Department's budget and savings they have identified.

Barry Thompson, Finance Director/Treasurer, reported on manager recommended budget totals for the General Fund and the Utility Fund. During his report, Mr. Thompson pointed out that in the past, the Public Works Director had included a portion of street paving costs in the Utility Fund. He noted that this year, he chose to cover the expense of paving entirely out of the General Fund.

Mr. Lawrence reported to Council that HVAC improvements costing \$5,000 needed at the Public Works building had been included in the proposed budget.

Mr. Nance questioned when work to replace two pressure reducing valves would be done. He was advised that the work would be delayed until the third quarter to assure there would be enough money left in the budget to pay for it.

During a discussion regarding street paving costs, Mr. Nance recommended putting approximately \$25,000 in the Utility Fund to help with paving costs and about \$40,000 from contingency reserves in the General Fund to pay for additional paving. This would give the Town approximately \$185,000 for paving next year. Mr. Hare recommended increasing funding for paving to \$200,000. He also recommended using some of the contingency funds to provide more employee recognition. Mr. Nance agreed with Mr. Hare's recommendation but felt it would be wise to wait until the middle of the budget year to see if it's going to be possible to provide employee bonuses or to move to 24 hour Fire and EMS coverage. Mr. Lawrence advocated taking the issue to the Employee Advisory Group for their recommendations. The Mayor stated that he feels employees should be paid a substantial bonus if at all possible. He went on to say that if something is not done for them, the Town will lose good employees when the economy picks up.

In a discussion regarding personnel changes in the Finance Department, Mr. Hare questioned whether costs for all the changes had been included in the proposed budget. Mr. Thompson replied affirmatively.

Mr. Hare pointed out that when the last water and sewer rate increase was under discussion, a couple of citizens questioned the wisdom of not having any buffer in the Utility Fund. He recommended that Council provide a buffer for the Utility Fund. He also acknowledged that the Utility Fund should be responsible for repairing roads that are damaged due to water and sewer line repairs but felt all other paving costs should come out of the General Fund. Following further discussion, Council agreed to

allocate a combined total of \$185,000 from both the General Fund and the Utility Fund for paving and \$2,811 for employee appreciation.

Mr. Hare commented that he could support a raise for employees at the end of the fiscal year if there is a budget surplus. He went on to say that if there is no budget surplus, he could not recommend a raise for employees. He encouraged Departments to work hard to create a surplus the way the Police Department did by deciding what was important and what was not. He went on to say that if employees are able to create a surplus, they should be able to share in the savings. Mr. Nance agreed that Council should wait until at least the middle of the fiscal year before making any decisions regarding employee supplemental pay.

Mr. Hare stated that he did not see how there would be funds enough to give employee raises next year or the year after unless Council reduces services or reduces the number of employees. Mayor Grose agreed with this comment. He advised that if Vinton is to continue to provide services it is now providing, the Town is going to have to grow. He felt their only answer would be to invest in economic development.

The Mayor stated that he was comfortable with taking funds for the employee supplement from the both contingency funds.

Mr. Lawrence reported on a memo he had received from Captain Cook asking Council to consider allowing the Police Department to cut certain line items that would allow funding for both part-time positions, for the purchase of additional ammunition and to continue their current car-washing contract. He noted that the changes would be "budget neutral".

Captain Cook outlined the benefits of being able to retain the three budget items noted above which are very important to the Police Department staff. He reviewed items they were willing to cut and the cost savings they would provide.

Mr. Nance questioned the wisdom of cutting out the Police Awards Banquet and recommended they take money from the Contingency Fund to cover that cost. The Mayor supported Mr. Nance's recommendation. There was a consensus of Council to take funds from the Contingency to insure the Police Awards Banquet can continue.

Captain Cook briefly discussed a recommendation to privatize animal control for wild animals as this task takes up most of the Animal Control Officer's time. He noted that privatizing animal control for wild animals would allow the Animal Control Officer to help cover calls when needed.

Council and Captain Cook discussed the Police Department's plans to cover current vacant positions.

At 7:00, the work session was adjourned and roll was called for a Special Called Meeting. In response to a request for a motion to go into a closed meeting, Vice Mayor Fidler moved to go into closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A) (3) of the Code of Virginia, as amended, for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hare with all in favor.

Following the closed meeting, the special called meeting reconvened and Councilman Nance moved to adopt the certification that the closed meeting was held in accordance with Virginia State Code

requirements. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Fidler and passed unanimously on a roll call vote. The Special Called meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Bradley E. Grose, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Darleen R. Bailey, Town Clerk