

Council Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2024

The Tazewell Town Council met in an executive session at 6:00p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present:

Absent:

Mayor Michael Hoops

Vice Mayor Glenn Catron

Councilmember Jonathan Hankins

Councilmember Zach Cline

Councilmember David Fox

Councilmember Emily Davis

Councilmember Joe Beasley

Staff present were: Interim Town Manager, Lianne Regon; Executive Assistant, Susan Reeves, Water Clerk, Sabrina Schooley.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Councilmember Fox to go into executive session. Motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Catron. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

RESOLUTION

Motion made by: Fox

Resolution Number: ES240402

Motion Seconded by: Catron

Meeting Date: 24 April 2

Vote: All voted Aye

Purpose: Personnel Matters

CERTIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, the Tazewell Town Council has convened an executive session on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, 2.1-344.1 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this Council that such executive session was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Tazewell Town Council hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia Law were discussed in the executive session to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the executive session were heard, discussed or considered by the Tazewell Town Council.

VOTE

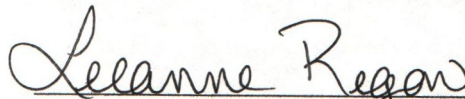
Ayes: Catron, Hankins, Cline, Fox, Davis, Beasley

Nays: none

(For each nay vote, the substance of the departure from the requirements of the Act should be described.)

Absent during vote:

Absent during meeting:



Leeanne Regan, Clerk

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Catron to come out of executive session. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Beasley. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye, Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

Mayor Hoops stated the reason they went into executive session was for Personnel Matters. He then read the resolution for Certification of Executive Session. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye, Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

BUDGET WORK SESSION

Interim Manager Regon wanted to give an update on an item in the general fund before moving forward to the Water & Sewer funds. She stated that she received the total assessments for real estate in the Town. That new amount is \$331,348,200. She had estimated the total assessment would be \$332,917,601 because the over all assessments in Tazewell County had increased by 22 %. She stated that after getting this data she is very confident with the numbers used in the revenue line item for real estate taxes. We will actually be billing out \$960,909 and we have a budgeted number of \$787,000. This is a difference of \$173,000. This could give us some cushion in the next years budget but we also have to account for customers that do not pay.

The next item of discussion was that we have received a funding request from OTR (Old Town Revival) for their event at Back of the Dragon. Interim Manager Regon wanted to make sure they were aware of this because it would be on the council agenda for next week's meeting. OTR has asked for \$10,000. They had originally asked for \$15,000. Council held discussion on this topic and had concern because most of the time when they give donations, it is to nonprofit causes. OTR is a for profit entity. It was stated that more so than donating to the event, they would much rather do something like sponsor the event. It was also discussed that the Town provides a lot of "in kind" funding for this event. We provide, public works, police, and EMS employees for their three day event. Council asked if there was anyway to gauge how this event helps the Town. Interim Manger Regon stated that she could pull meals tax from the previous month and the month that would reflect when the event was held and see what kind of difference there is. It was asked if she could also pull for transient occupancy tax. She stated yes she could do that and she will go back to 2021 to current and get that information together for them. It was suggested that we put a time limit on how many years we will support their event financially.

There were concerns about the event last year leaving our Main Street full of markings from burn outs at the event location. Interim Manager Regon stated that at a meeting held in January, she sternly told them, absolutely no blackmarks on town streets. They were measuring their parking lots to see that they could accommodate that on their own private property.

The next item of discussion was that we have the opportunity to apply for funding from Congressionally Directed Spending. This is due on Friday. Interim Manager Regon asked if council would support the Town applying for this and submitting the following items:

Cellular Endpoints for our water meters. This would allow us to read meters in our office. Also, if someone thought they had a leak, we could pull up their meter right then and check it. It is in real time. This would benefit the town by reducing the man hours it would take to address reading meters and checking for leaks. It would also reduce fuel cost.

The next item we would like to apply for would be to build a Farmers Market Pavilion at the site of the bowling alley once demo occurs. The Farmers Market president and vice president attended the IEDA meeting yesterday and seemed to be receptive of the idea of having a permanent location.

The final request would be for the police department. If or when they get to relocate, they will need items such as a new phone system, equipment for their training center, building security, and ID printer, etc.

Council gave the go ahead to apply for the funding and stated they would support this.

WATER FUND BUDGET DISCUSSION

Interim Manager Regon stated that we are approaching the beginning of the Rt 460 waterline replacement project. Before Manager Day left he approached Executive Assistant Reeves and herself to say that we needed an additional \$80,000 for this project and he needed a rate increase to do so. She then showed water rate information from the past three years. It also showed 12 month historical usage data. She stated that even at the lowest point, we still need to be sure that we would hit our \$80,000 mark. They figured the rate increase based on the lowest consumption point of the data. The rates would be implemented over a period of three years.

The rates are as follows:

In Town \$.73 over three years

In Town Overage \$1.20 over three years

Out of Town \$1.25 over three years

Out of Town Overage \$1.25 over three years

She begins discussing the RT 460 project again and stated that the Tazewell County PSA would be going in 50/50 on this project. The Town and PSA would each be in the project for \$650,000. PSA has stated they will not go over that threshold. There are three phases of the project however we believe that we will run out of funding before we get to phase three. She stated that Virginia Department of Health Office of Drinking Water had contacted her yesterday needed some documents in order to set up a force account for the project. She stated that the Town had never done a force account before and that it was recommended that we call Town of Marion because they are very familiar with this process. She called Town Manager Bill Rush of Marion and he was very helpful and sent her some of their documentation to go by and even offered to invite us over to Marion and show us how to work a force account and track your information.

At this time, they reviewed the proposed budget with the rate increases. It was stated that it is a balanced budget. After short discussion, Interim Manager Regon asked if they would feel comfortable with these rates. They agreed yes. Councilmember Cline asked about future line replacement plans and stated that we should possibly consider raising the rates a little more to build ourselves a fund for line replacement. They then reviewed the line maintenance line item in

the budget. Interim Manager Regon stated that while she liked the idea of preparing now for future line replacement projects, she was concerned about when we would be able to perform the work. She stated that we will be starting the Rt 460 project in June and it will take a couple years to complete all the work. She is concerned that if we plan more projects now, that we will not have the manpower to execute the project for some time. They then discussed a method that PSA uses. They have an IRF (Infrastructure Repair Fee) on their monthly bills. They charge \$4.50 for water and for sewer. It was stated that we could implement something like this and create an LGIP account to hold the funds until it was time to use them.

SEWER FUND BUDGET DISCUSSION

Interim Manager Regon stated that in November they had a sewer rate discussion. She asked if they wanted her to review it again with them. They stated no it wasn't necessary. She did however give them the rates they discussed. They are as follows:

In Town \$3.32 over three years

In Town Overage \$5.05 over three years

Out of Town \$5.00 over three years

Out of Town Overage \$6.75 over three years

They began reviewing the proposed sewer budget with the rate increase. Vice Mayor Catron asked about leachate and stated that with the cost of chemicals etc. going up, should the cost (\$.01 a gallon) go up as well. If it is taking more to treat the leachate maybe we need to look at what we charge. Interim Manager Regon stated that she would review the contract and review the terms for accepting leachate.

They discussed a line item increase for equipment. The WWTP Operator has requested a SCADA system. This is a system that is used for monitoring our WWTP system either remotely or on site.

IEDA FUND BUDGET DISCUSSION

Interim Manager Regon stated that the IEDA fund really didn't have any activity in it. She did however give them funds in miscellaneous revenue for grants they may receive and she expensed that same amount out in miscellaneous expense.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Fox made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Catron. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23pm.