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Town of Bladensburg
Mayor and Council FY24 Budget **Work Session #3**
Monday, May 1, 2023

Mayor James opened the meeting at 5:30pm and called the meeting to order. Attending were Mayor James, and Council Members (CM) Brown, Blount, Route, McBryde. Staff attending were Acting Town Administrator Charnovich, Treasurer Tinelli, Chief Collington, Code Enforcement Supervisor Rinehart, and Public Works Supervisor Hall.

Mayor James welcomed the Council, public, and staff to the third budget work session. She handed the meeting over to Treasurer Tinelli to continue with the budget discussion.

Mr. Tinelli said the first budget session on April 17th focused on revenues, the second budget session on April 24th we focused on the administrative departments which are only 14% of our total operating budget. These include the Mayor and Council, Town Administrator, Clerk, and Finance. This work session will be for our direct service budgets which is Public Safety, Public Works, and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

CM Route asked about where we left off with the Grants Writer position in the administrative budget since there will be a lot of funds coming down next year. Tinelli said staff would come back with a proposal of what the costs would be. Mayor James said we should have this as a contractual position so it's not a full-time position with benefits. CM Route said we can recoup the costs in the grants.

Public Safety

This is our largest department at 59% of our total budget but is made up of several sub departments such as the police officers, communications, code enforcement, and the CAT team. Some items have changed in the 45 days since this first budget draft was completed:

- Compensation will be reduced by almost \$230K since we had (2) extra officers in there with associated benefits. These were to backfill positions which will be vacated by July 1.
 - Not all the compensation costs are in here since some salary costs for the police officers were shifted to ARPA. These costs include the FY23 and FY24 cost of living increases and associated payroll taxes which is about 18% of the police officers compensation costs but we can discuss when we got to ARPA.
- Tuition reimbursement remained constant at \$20K from FY23 to FY24. We have spent almost half of the budget this fiscal year.
- Uniforms increased from \$46K to \$50K but we will pull all of this from the Automated Traffic Enforcement fund. Mayor James asked Chief Collington about riot gear for the police officers. He responded we can bring the added costs to the next budget meeting.
- Recruitment remained constant at \$16K from FY23 to FY24.
- Professional development increased from \$20K to \$35K for more specialized training. We also have increased K9 costs and trainings for our two dogs. Veterinary visits are also part of this.
 - CM Route asked if we can have a separate K9 line item? Chief Collington said they track all these services internally through K9 Tracker software. Mr. Tinelli said he considers the K9's as police personnel and see them as part of the staff and would like to keep their costs within the current accounts.

- Mayor James asked if there is enough budgeted for workers compensation insurance. Mr. Tinelli said we have not received our quote for next year yet but the insurer did go to new national underwriter so we hope the costs will come down. We are a high risk entity because we have a large police force, we are inside the beltway, and also have several losses over the years.
- Community events budget remained constant at \$15K from FY23 to FY24. The town did have the Rose Awards which was new and will continue so may have to increase this budget.
- Telephone costs remained constant at \$27K which is for our phone system and landlines.
- Wireless Communications decreased slightly from \$46K for FY23 to \$40K in FY24. These are for the mobile data terminals on the police vehicles and hotspots. We are also looking into issuing Town phones which may lead to some savings but will know more this week.
- Communications contracts is for the annual licensing with Motorola for our communications equipment to include the police radios and our radio tower. This increased slightly from \$34K this year to \$38K in FY24 but will be funded by the speed camera revenues.
- Interoperability and Internet access were combined into just Internet Access with their total budgets remaining unchanged at \$7K from FY23 to FY24. Data Fees increase slightly by \$500 to \$2K in FY24.
- IT Support was held constant but we just received a quote for services next year which is an increase of \$10K. Our IT provider has not increased pricing in a few years and we are steadily adding more software, computers, a new server, and email server to support and provide 24 hours support. CM Brown asked if we can shop this with other vendors.
- Software Contracts increased from \$8K to \$20K for all the software packages such as the training software, Barracuda Backup, TrendMicro antivirus, MS 365 email application, SonicWall firewall, and records management software; all of which require annual licensing.
- Insurances – we will need to increase the auto insurance by \$5K to \$50K for next fiscal year.
- Equipment lease and contractual services remained constant from FY23 to FY24 for \$9K and \$15K respectively.
- Automated traffic enforcement of \$100K is for the monthly costs of the speed camera program for the cameras and for collection costs.
- CM Brown asked about parking enforcement and if we have software which tracks this or can we add dedicated staff for enforcement?
 - Mayor James asked Chief if he could look at adding one or two full time contractors to aid in parking enforcement and to supplement Code Enforcement on nights and weekends. Chief said this could greatly benefit the Town.
 - CM Blount asked if we are getting any additional cameras? Chief Collington said the Town is working on adding red light cameras next.
 - Mayor James asked about the cadet program and make sure we do not lose sight of this and see where it can be placed in the budget.
- Fuel increased from \$75K to \$100K based on current trends and it looks like fuel will not come back down anytime soon based on commodity prices, summer demand, OPEC has cut production, Russia is offline because of the war, etc.
- Vehicles repairs will remain constant at \$40K in FY24 which has come down over the years as we update our fleet.
- Vehicle Body repairs increased from \$15K to \$30K since we are seeing more vehicles damaged not only by our drivers but by uninsured drivers as well. LGIT our insurance agent reimburses us for these repairs less the deductible but these are realized as revenues to offset this expense.

- Other items such as Weapons Supplies, Membership, Travel, Office Supplies, Finger Printing, Utilities, and Postage remained constant from FY23 to FY24.
- Supplies increased from 4K to \$20K as it costs more to equip our officers. Other items include first aid kits, trauma kits, K9 costs, and small equipment costs.
 - Mayor James asked about the mobile police lighting trailers if that could fit here or somewhere else in the budget. Chief Collington said we just ordered three mobile lighting tower trailers with police lights and cameras mounted on these. The Council asked to see if we could double these to six this year or for next budget year.
- Capital Outlay – similar budget item as last year at \$244K which is for replacement of (4) vehicles outfitted at \$52K each and (9) more police radios at \$4K each. Last year we funded these from ARPA but we will fund these through the speed camera program in FY24.
 - Chief Collington said this needs to be updated to \$48K for vehicle costs and \$20K for the upfitting for a total of \$68K per vehicle instead of \$52K.
 - CM Route asked about the hybrid and Chief Collington said we will put the hybrid in patrol to see

Public Works

- Compensation is 12% lower next year because we removed the Public Works Director position. This was put in/taken out of the budget over the past few years and it remains vacant this year. Staff believes we are working well with the current structure but this is up to the Mayor and Council for discussion.
- Tuition reimbursement and professional development remains the same at \$3,500 and \$2,000 respectively for FY24. This has not been utilized yet this year but do not want to penalize anyone from taking advantage of this next year.
- Computer expense was removed this year since we updated the computers this fiscal year.
- Fuel remains the same for FY24 at \$20K. We increased this for Public Safety since they have many more vehicles and travel further but the Public Works vehicles remain local and consume less.
- Vehicle repairs and maintenance increased from \$15K to \$20K as the fleet is getting older and we are not on an aggressive replacement schedule as we are with Public Safety. Also, the trucks are heavier and the components cost more and are older but the trucks also last longer.
- Equipment maintenance should be increased up to \$10K from \$6K based on the same reasons above.
- We keep budget building maintenance high every year at \$50K because of the age of all the buildings which include Town Hall, the Police Annex, Public Works, and Bostwick. The plumbing issue we have in the Police Department will cost one third of the budget for this year.
- Ground maintenance will be increased next year from \$20K to \$30 which is for upkeep of all the grounds and roads to include minor road repairs, salt, road signs, park maintenance, etc. We look at this account at the end of the fiscal year and apply any road work to the Highway User Funds.
- Street lights remain the same at \$50K to power the 434 street lights in Town every year. There was discussion about these and the costs to upgrade and add new and where funding could come from.
- Sanitation contract has increased \$100K next year since we are out of contract and paying approximately \$25K per month. This will be bid out but based on fuel prices and increased landfill costs this account should be kept at the higher level.
- Building supplies which are the consumables increased from \$8K to \$10K for next fiscal year because of higher prices being paid for supplies.

- We increased utilities from \$20K to \$28K because of the higher cost of power and gas.
- Capital Outlay – in the 45 days since creating the budget, we had further discussions and realized we need to add equipment for next fiscal year:
 - Asphalt Planer for \$25K so we can do larger asphalt road repairs which can mill down the road to make a better repair rather than just filling in pot holes.
 - Box Sweeper for \$5K which is used to clear debris from the roads and in conjunction with the asphalt planer above.
 - Kubota Tractor for \$13K which will replace the older Exmark mower for grounds maintenance.
 - Crosswalk painter for \$24K which applies a thermoplastic paint which is harder and more durable for the 14 crosswalks in Town.
 - Line Sprayer for \$15K
 - Total of \$82K we need to add to the FY24 budget request next year.

Treasurer Tinelli said he will incorporate all these changes into the new draft of the budget to send to the Mayor and Council along with a list of all the changes discussed over the last three budget work sessions. We will discuss ARPA at the Mayor and Council Work Session on Monday May 8, 2023.

Mayor James called for motion to adjourn the meeting, CM Brown made the motion, CM Blount seconded the motion and it pass unanimously. Meeting concluded at 7:40pm.

Minutes taken by Vito Tinelli