

**Town of Pinetops
Board of Commissioners
Special Call Meeting
Public Hearing for FY 2024-2025 Budget Approval
June 27, 2024; 5:00 PM**

Present: All Board Members were present for the Public Hearing.

Also in attendance: Finance Officer Tammy Keesler, Public Works Superintendent Cody Lancaster, and Police Chief Stacy Harrell.

A. Call to Order

Mayor Harrell called the June 27, 2024 Special Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

B. Invocation

Commissioner Sugg led invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Harrell led the pledge of Allegiance.

D. Call Public Hearing to Order

Mayor Harrell proceeded to call the Public Hearing on the FY 2024-2025 Budget to order.

Discuss Budget Process

The Finance Officer took a moment to go over the fiscal year 2024-2025 proposed budget adoption timeline. There were three budget work sessions held. One took place on February 20th, the was held on March 19th, and the last work session was held on May 20, 2024. Then on June 4, 2024, the budget message was presented to the Board. At that meeting the Board set a Public Hearing on the Adoption of the Budget for June 27, 2024. The Public Hearing was advertised twice in the local paper. A copy of the proposed budget has been made available on the town's website as well as a copy at the Town Hall for public inspection.

E. Present Budget Message, Budget Ordinance, and Fee Schedule

During the June 4th meeting the Finance Officer highlighted a few of the key items that were included in the budget message. The tax rate remained the same, which is \$0.58 per hundred dollars of assessed valuation. The costs to residents will increase due to the county's revaluation.

The sanitation fee remained the same at \$25 per customer per month. The stormwater fee remained the same at \$2 per customer per month.

The electric rate remains unchanged, but it was noted that residents could see a slight increase around October due to Duke Energy updating one of its facilities to a more "renewable energy" friendly option. Duke Energy will pass along the cost of this project to the City of Wilson who in return will pass it down to its municipalities. At that point the town will pass the cost down to its residents.

There is no proposed increase to the water, but the sewer rate will increase by 5%. The increase will apply to both inside and outside customers. The 5% increase will be applied to both the Basic Charge and cost/1000gals. on each tier.

The town decided to switch to another medical group plan that provides an additional medi-bridge gap plan which will save the town around \$18,466. The proposed budget does include a 3% COLA and a 2% market adjustment for employees.

The budget does contain several debt payments for police vehicles as well as maintenance vehicles, but most of the debt comes from the water & sewer department. The annual cost of the NCDEQ loan is \$102,095. The proposed budget includes the purchase of a Stock Fouts Four w/options (mini pumper) fire tire in the amount of \$329,200. The majority of the funding source will be a directed grant from the Regional Economic Development Reserve in the amount of \$300,000.

F. Open Floor for Public Comments

After the presentation from the Finance Officer the Mayor proceeded to open the floor for any comments as it pertains to the proposed 2024-2025 budget. No citizens were present at the Public Hearing.

G. Close Public Hearing

Mayor Harrell closed the Public Hearing.

Call Special Meeting to Order

Mayor Harrell called the Special Meeting back to Order.

H. Proposed Agenda

Mayor Harrell requested that the proposed agenda be amended to include an update on the Advisory Board. Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the proposed agenda as amended. Commissioner Bullock seconded the motion. Motion carried.

I. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the June 4, 2024, minutes as written. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

J. Action Items/New Business

Chief Harrell informed the Board that the police department is down one officer due to injury. He explained that he really wants to pair two officers together on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday while the injury officer is out. He mentioned this because he may have to do some overtime to help during this time but he will try to curtail it; and at this time he is not asking for any additional money. He is going to try to use the two reserve officers to help with this, but it is hard for him to get any additional reserve officers at their current rate of pay which is \$25 when surrounding places are paying \$40. Commissioner Taylor made a motion to increase the reserve officers pay from \$25 to \$40. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

1. Approve Budget Amendments

The Finance Officer presented the Board with a list of budget amendments that needed to be approved. Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Commissioner Bullock seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Adoption of FY 2024-2025 Budget & Fee Schedule

Commissioner Webb made a motion to adopt the FY 2024-2025 Budget & Fee Schedule. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Approve 2024 Audit Engagement Letter & Audit Contract

Commissioner Sugg made a motion to approve the 2024 Audit Engagement Letter & Audit Contract not to exceed \$16,700. Commissioner Webb seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. FYE Close-Out/Close Early on June 28th

The Finance Officer asked the Board's permission to close around Noon on Friday, June 28th so that the fiscal year end can be closed out and the new fiscal year can be rolled over. Commissioner Webb made a motion to approve this request. Commissioner Bullock seconded the motion. Motion carried.

5. Update on Offer to Purchase – 107 W. Sater Street

The Finance Officer informed the Board that she had received a 2nd offer to purchase from Little Dumas LLC. Mayor Harrell opened and read the offer to purchase which was \$7,900. The Finance Officer explained that if the Board wanted to proceed, they would need to declare the property (107 W. Sater Street) as surplus and give authorization to advertise the bid for upset bidders. The initial bidder would need to supply a 5% deposit prior to advertisement for bids. Upset bidders will have 10 days to submit upset bids then at the August meeting the Board will decide whether to accept this or any other offer. The Board has the right to accept or reject any offers. Commissioner Webb made a motion to declare 107 W. Sater Street surplus and authorize the Finance Officer to advertise the bid process. Commissioner Sugg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. Any Other Business

Reminder that there is no Board meeting scheduled for the month of July.

Mayor Harrell provided the Board with an update on the Advisory Board. She told the Board that she has spoken with Bruce Naegelon twice concerning the Board. The Town Board will need to appoint two new members to the Advisory Board at the August meeting. She explained that 1 of the members had resigned before their last meeting and one member had not attended the last six meetings. New applications will be presented at the August meeting where two new members will be appointed to the Advisory Board. The new term will be for three years. Bruce Naegelon will be at the next 5-6 meetings to help train the remaining members and the newly appointed members. He had also suggested that one member from the Town Board attend their monthly meetings.

Commissioner Sugg commented that the Advisory Board and the Strategic Plan kind of goes hand in hand and he would like to see both thrive. Commissioner Sugg and Commissioner Kendrick both stated that they would volunteer to work on the strategic planning.

The Board agreed to open the Event Center back up for rental on July 1st.

K. Adjournment

Commissioner Webb made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Bullock seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Date: 8/6/2024

ATTESTED:



Finance Officer/Town Clerk Tammy Keesler



Mayor Brenda Harrell