



120 North Essa Street, Lake Park, Georgia 31636
City Hall 229-559-7470
Fax 229-559-7499

City of Lake Park
Budget Public Hearing Minutes
December 19, 2024
6:00 pm

Members present were Mayor Jena Sandlin, Council Member Michelle Lane, Council Member Carl Spano and Council Member Busby Courson

Staff Present: City Clerk Lisa Johnson

Mayor Jena Sandlin called the meeting to order.

Mayor Jena Sandlin led the invocation.

Mayor Jena Sandlin led the pledge.

Mayor Sandlin opened the meeting and asked Budget Officer Carl Spano if he wanted to say anything about the Budgets before the floor was opened for comment.

Budget Officer Carl Spano gave a summary of the Proposed Budgets; the General Fund budget has increases for the Police Department that includes increasing hours for the part-time position, for the Maintenance Department to include a third position, and pay increases for all employees, as well as an increase for Christmas Bonuses in 2025. Most of TSPLOST and SPLOST 8 Streets and Roads is allocated for drainage issues. For Administration, an amount to install a payment window on the Court side of the hall and demolition of the "Blue Building" and a storage building to replace it. The Blue Building has been discovered to have black mold, which presents a health hazard for staff and volunteers who need to go in there. Also discussed is enclosing and paving a portion of the block for an employee parking lot. Currently, there are no specific projects for Parks and Recreation, but there are some possible projects which have been requested via letter from volunteers, which will be presented later. Council Member Lane noted that in previous meetings Council has discussed digitizing records, and asked if that is not still a consideration. Council Member Spano responded that this was a possibility, but a question for down the road; the immediate need is that it is a health concern. Council Member Busby Courson asked if we had a balanced budget; Council Member Spano responded that we do have a balanced budget in every budget. City Clerk Lisa Johnson noted that on the Capital Budgets (SPLOST, TSPLOST) there is a line item in revenues for Fund Balance transferred in, and in expenditures for Fund Balance transferred; since the entirety of these Capital Revenues and expenditures span several years, these amounts are shown as transferred from previous or to next year's so the monies are available in the budget. Council Member Spano commended City Clerk Lisa Johnson for the hours and hours spent developing and fine-tuning the budget numbers; Mrs. Johnson expressed her appreciation for Mr. Spano's help.

Citizen Concerns:

Mayor Sandlin introduced a letter from Linda Hogan and Justin Sandlin, the volunteers who work every year on the 4th of July and Christmas events, which was distributed to Council and is included as an integral part of the Minutes. Council discussed the requests for budget increases; Council Member Spano noted that it is too late to add the amount requested into the FY25 budget, but depending on itemized pricing, some things may be possible; he suggested requesting a Budget Plan for the events in question. He further expressed concern that the implication of the letter is that if the increases are not approved, the volunteer group will disband. Mayor Sandlin asked the City Clerk to research Hahira's and other area cities' special events and their budgets for those. Council Member Lane noted that the City of Hahira also has employees who organize these events, rather than volunteers, going on to say that the Council's job is to make the best use of the money available for the benefit of the people. Council Member Courson asked for clarification on the number of full-time employees budgeted for Maintenance; Council Member Spano answered that three are budgeted, with the existing employees receiving a 3% raise, and the third budgeted at \$17/hour. Council had decided to advertise for a Maintenance position in the hopes that we could find someone who would subsequently be able to advance to Maintenance Supervisor. City Clerk Lisa Johnson clarified that the range advertised was \$15-\$17 per hour, but the budget is for \$17, as it is the "top end" of the range. Council Member Courson noted that if the new employee could be certified for Water License, that would add more money back into the budget. Council discussed the productivity of the contract laborers and the potential for getting prison labor to help with mowing and weed eating, and the percentage of time needed by full-time employees to handle mowing and weed eating. Council Member Spano noted that there are a number of things that should be done on a regular schedule that currently are not. City Clerk Lisa Johnson stated that she and Council Member Spano had calculated the hours the City is currently paying for between the full-time employees and contract laborers to handle the Maintenance department, and came up to 450 hours per month, without the community service people, which fluctuates. The current need is not for mowing and weed eating, but tasks which typically fall under "Public Works" that have not been getting done: cleaning out pipes and ditches, a regular schedule for hydrants, etc., and coordinating the processes and tasks. She noted that the biggest project is Sheavette and Broadway and along Broadway, as everything appears to be designed to drain towards the drainage easement in dispute. At 4-H Club Rd, the question is which set of plans is correct, and where the drainage is supposed to go, whether down Sevilla Springs Circle to the canals, or down 4-H Club Rd to Marion Ave. The plans also show there are two easements coming off of the cul-de-sac to carry water from Sevilla Springs Circle to the canals, but there are no As-Builts or easement documents that confirm that. She stated that Mike Killeen had located the water line on Railroad Avenue, and when she talked to him, he told her that he had dug the canals originally and the easements were agreed on and later retracted.

There being no other public comments, Council Member Spano made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Courson seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor Sandlin adjourned the meeting; the Budget Adoption meeting will be held on December 27, 2024 at 1:00 pm.

Addendum:

Following the close of the meeting, the City Clerk asked a question regarding Agenda items for January, as second interviews for applicants for the Maintenance position had been discussed for that night. Council discussed the timeline for second interviews and whether there was a need to hold other interviews before that stage. Council asked that all resumes/applications that had been received for the position be forwarded to Members, and agreed to postpone second interviews until January 13.


Jena Sandlin, Mayor

1-7-25
Date

Seal


Lisa Johnson, City Clerk

January 7, 2025
Date