



## TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN

Town Hall, 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, NC 28711

Date: **June 14, 2023** Time: **5:30 p.m.**

**Budget Public Hearing**

### Minutes

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**THE BLACK MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL** held a special call meeting on Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the board room of Town Hall, 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain NC.

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor C. Michael Sobol called the meeting to order with the following in attendance:

Mayor C. Michael Sobol  
Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller  
Council Member Alice Berry  
Council Member Bill Christy  
Council Member Doug Hay  
Council Member Pam King

The following staff members were present:

Josh Harrold, Town Manager  
Savannah Parrish, Town Clerk

The manager's recommended Budget and Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan for FY23-24 was submitted to the Town Council on Wednesday, May 31, 2023. The Town Council met on June 14, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. for the budget public hearing.

Mayor Sobol began the meeting by suggesting cutting the cost-of-living adjustment increase to 2% this year and giving another 2% next year. He said the town would not have to raise taxes if this was done. He also gave other recommendations on where budgets could be cut, including the police department not buying two new patrol vehicles and postponing or changing paving projects. He also gave other recommendations on where budgets could be cut, including the police department not buying two new patrol vehicles and postponing or changing paving projects.

Town Manager Josh Harrold presented the fiscal year 2023-24 Recommended Budget to the Town Council. Included in the budget is a property tax increase of 1.5 cents, bringing the tax rate up to 32.1 cents per \$100 valuation, up from 30.6 cents. This marks the first property tax increase since 2010 and the second in 30 years.

The recommended budget for fiscal year 2023-2024 totals \$ 18,895,905 for all Town operations, capital improvements and debt service. This represents an 11.8% increase of the current budget. This increase can be attributed to an overall addition in personnel and capital items to be purchased across all departments, increases in operating expenses, as well as proposed capital projects in the Utility Fund.

Water fees and charges at current rates generate \$2,564,100. Residential customers using an average of 5000 gallons a month will see an increase of \$2.76 per month. Water fees and charges for out-of-town customers will see an increase of \$10.62 per month.

The proposed budget includes a cost-of-living increase of 4% beginning July 1, 2023, rising retirement costs, as well as the creation of 3 new positions and expansion of 2 others.

The budget contains \$871,200 for the Town's part of the North Carolina State Health Plan and supplemental insurance. In general, health insurance costs continue to rise faster than inflation.

***Councilmember Doug Hay moved to open the public hearing. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.***

Robin Stiles spoke in favor of the tax increase.

Dan Cordell asked that the Town Council not increase taxes.

***Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller moved to close the public hearing. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.***

Councilmember King reminded the public that the Town Council had been working on the budget for several months, and all of the decisions were made very thoughtfully. She thanked the staff for their work on the budget, and for making many cuts to their requests.

Vice Mayor Pertiller thanked the staff for their work on the budget.

Councilmember Hay expressed his desire to balance fiscal responsibility and the needs of the community, and felt this budget found that balance. He conveyed his pride in the work done on the budget, both by council and staff.

Councilmembers Christy and Berry also thanked staff and indicated support for the recommended budget.

***Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller moved to adopt Budget Ordinance O-23-10 as recommended. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.***

## **2. ADJOURNMENT**

***There being no further business, Mayor C. Michael Sobol adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.***

ATTEST:

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C. Michael Sobol, Mayor

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Savannah Parrish, Town Clerk