BLACK MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

March 28, 2024 | Special Called Meeting | Time: 8:30 A.M.

Town Hall Council Chambers | 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, NC 28711

The Black Mountain Town Council held a meeting on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, NC 28711. The purpose of this meeting was to hold a FY 2024-25 Budget Work Session.

Mayor C. Michael Sobol called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with the following members in attendance: Mayor C. Michael Sobol, Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller, Council Member Alice Berry, Council Member Doug Hay, Council Member Pam King, and Council Member Ryan Stone.

The following staff members were present: Josh Harrold, Town Manager; Jessica Trotman, Assistant Town Manager & Planning Director; Wesley Barker, Town Clerk; Tammy Holland, Finance Director; Josh Henderson, Recreation & Parks Director; John Coffey, Fire Chief; Jamey Matthews, Public Works Director; Steve Parker, Police Chief. Several other staff members were also present.

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FY 2024-25 Budget Work Session.

This budget work session is a continuation of presentations from all town departments with their budget requests. This includes a proposed 5% cost of living increase for town employee salaries across all departments. The budget requests of the following departments were reviewed during this work session:

• Public Works: General	• Public Works: Building & Grounds	• Public Works: Sanitation
• Public Works: Streets & Highways	• Powell Bill	• Fire Department
• Parks & Recreation: General	• Parks & Recreation: Lakeview	• Parks & Recreation: Pool

Noteworthy items discussed during these presentations are included per each fund listed below:

Public Works: General

- A request to add an Assistant Public Works Director position due to workload and needs.

Public Works: Building & Grounds

- Lower amount in contract services due to not using a leaf pickup service next year. The current $2.00 fee will be discussed when the revenue budget is reviewed.

Public Works: Sanitation
- Training needs for staff was discussed.
- An increase in vehicle maintenance expense to account for maintenance costs on aging vehicles.
- A decrease in fuel expense over what was budgeted for FY 24.

Public Works: Streets & Highways
- Request to unfreeze two positions for FY 25 that were frozen during the FY 24 budget.
- Request to create and add two new positions for employees eligible for a Tech III position with garnering specific skillsets. Some discussion ensued around current employees interested in learning specific skills/certifications, and the benefits of having employees with these skillsets instead of hiring outside for a service (e.g. welding) which in turn would save the town money.
- Other requests included equipment needs, motorized and non-motorized (e.g. salt spreaders and plows).

Powell Bill
- An estimated $280,000 should be received from the Powell Bill this year. These state funds are used for Town street paving projects. It was stated that the calculations of State Powell Bill allocations were changing this year.

Parks & Recreation: General
- Request for new cameras at Grey Eagle and turf replacement at Grey Eagle that is currently eighteen years old.
- An increase in part-time salaries due to more indoor and outdoor program offerings and the need to staff these (e.g. referees for sports, summer camp counselors)
- A brief discussion ensued of lighting costs to light the tunnel under I-40 at Veterans Park that would meet DOT regulations.

Parks & Recreation: Lakeview Center
- Summer camps would be moving out of there and going to Grey Eagle, which would free up space for more rentals, activities/programs.

Parks & Recreation: Pool
- Requests include replacement of new pool equipment (e.g. pool chairs) and replacement of pool equalizers which must be replaced every five years per the permit with Buncombe County, who issues the Town's pool operating permit.
- Discussion ensued about beginning to charge each town department for water costs beginning in FY 25, which had not been accounted for previously. The pool would have the largest water expense at an estimated $18,000.

Fire Department
- Requests include four new positions for the department which would bring staffing numbers from 24 to 28. One of these new positions would be a Community Education and Engagement Coordinator who would also assist with in-house staff training. The remaining three positions would be entry-level firefighter positions. With the new positions, there

would be 8 firefighters on staff each shift, compared to the current 6 on staff each shift.

- There are currently no volunteer firefighters associated with the department that are physically able to fight fires.
- A request for new uniforms was discussed. The longevity of uniforms is approximately one year. This request would provide three shirts and three pairs of pants to firefighters.
- A replacement for Engine 41 (mini-pumper truck) was discussed. This is a specialty vehicle with a specific purpose. The cost of this vehicle would be approximately $450,000. The Town Manager suggested using capital reserve funds if this vehicle purchase was approved.
- Goals for future years include purchase of a new ladder truck. Some discussion ensued on this item.

Council Member Pam King left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Town Manager Josh Harrold stated the review of the capital budget would take place at a future budget meeting.

The next FY 2024-25 budget workshop will be held on Thursday, April 11, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. at Town Hall with the following remaining departments presenting their budget requests: Planning & Development, Stormwater, Golf Course, Water.

There being no further business, Mayor C. Michael Sobol adjourned the meeting at 10:01 a.m.

C Michael Sobol

C. Michael Sobol, Mayor

ATTEST:

Wesley M. Barker, Town Clerk