

**TOWN OF ASTATULA
MAYOR AND TOWN
SUMMARY MINUTES**



**BUDGET WORKSHOP
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 2019
TOWN HALL**

Having been duly advertised as required by law, Mayor Robert Natale called the Budget Workshop meeting to order at 6.07pm. The invocation was given by Councilor Sikkema and Mayor Natale led the pledge of allegiance.

Members Present:

Robert Natale, Mayor
Mitchell Mack, Vice-Mayor (arrived at 6:35 pm)
Kimberley Kobera
Gayle Sikkema
Absent: Stephen Cross

Also Present:

Graham Wells, Town Clerk

Roll Call was performed, and it was determined that a quorum was present. Mayor Natale welcomed Stephanie Lloyd of 25923 Zinnia Lane who was present and invited her to address the board.

Ms. Lloyd asked about the completion of the installation of missing street signs and also about the beautification of the Town. She said that the Clerk and Council were doing a good job, but she didn't think that there should be any annual raises. She sited that the Clerk already earned good money, likely more than most residents of Astatula. She added that the saving should be used to beautify the town or just keep it in the bank account; "we don't have to spend it just because we have it".

Mayor Natale responded that the Clerks experience and skills have saved the town more money than he has cost it and referenced the comparison to the previous Clerk who cost the town money. He added that an analysis of the cost of the Police Department in other local towns and cities showed that our officers are under paid by comparison. If the town does not pay the going rate for its staff and officers, then they can go find employment elsewhere. The town has only been able to give small raises in the past and the five percent this year will help to bring them up to par with other towns.

Proposed changes to the Budget since July 29 Workshop

Clerk Wells went over the changes to the budget since the last workshop on July 29. He was concerned that the \$35,195 of revenue from impact fees put in the budget was restricted funds that were not be able to be spent on General Fund expenditure. As a result, he had reviewed the revenues and expenditures and made several adjustments which he went over in detail with Council. A portion of the Public Works wages were moved to the Transportation fund to cover the cost of mowing the Right-of-Ways. In total there was \$30,000 savings on expenditures added to the \$10,000 of additional revenues. This enabled the budget to be balanced without the use of impact fees.

Reconsideration of Council Pay Increase – Budget impact \$3,300 (General Fund)

The subject of Mayor and Council pay was discussed at length. Council had previously rejected any increase over what they are currently paid.

A resident said that the Mayor and Council had done an exceptional job over the past year and recommended that they should accept the proposed increase. This was echoed by Chief Hoagland. Councilor Kobera was not in favor of accepting a raise as she didn't want the backlash for such a small amount of money. Councilor Sikkema concurred.

Mayor Natale said that his time is valuable, and we need to be developing people to step up and serve. He feels that it should at least be somewhat more attractive to encourage people to serve. There is a lot to learn and a lot of responsibility on the Mayor and Council. He added that the increase was small, but it was a start. Vice-Mayor Mack said that he would rather use the money in another area. The total increase was only \$3,300 which would get spent in another area if not accepted.

Clerk Wells suggested that Council take a straw poll to decide as it affected the budget and the Ordinance that was coming before Council at the Regular meeting that would follow. The consensus was to leave the remuneration at the current level.

Purchase of new Police Vehicle – Budget Impact \$35,488 (Impact Fees)

The Police Department needs to purchase a new police car. The Town is operating two 2013 Dodge Chargers which are costing a lot in repair bills. As a new position was created with the School Resource Officer, there is a onetime opportunity to purchase it from Public Safety Impact Fees. Chief Hoagland said that car has been located which is available right now, but we would have to move on it immediately. The cost of the car is approximately \$35,000 fully equipped and Council approved it to go in the new budget.

Purchase of Body Cameras – Budget Impact \$13,796 (Impact Fees)

Chief Hoagland pitched to Council to add the purchase of body cameras to the Budget. The cost to equip all the officers is around \$14,000 which includes maintenance, storage and replacement cameras after three years.

Clerk Wells explained that both the car and body cameras would be shown in police expenditure (521). The police car would be covered by the \$35,195 in Impact fee revenue and the cameras by a carry forward figure from a previous year.

Distribution of Salary Increase for Police Officers – No Budget Impact

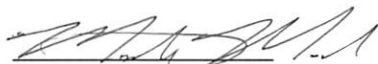
Clerk Wells made a proposal to Council to distribute the total money from the five percent increase for police officers in a different way. Having discussed it with the Chief and following the analysis requested by Councilor Cross and provided to Council, it was evident that Cpl. Capraun was grossly underpaid for his rank. To enable him to be brought up to the right level, the increases for other officers would range from three percent to six percent leaving a greater amount of money to increase the pay to Cpl. Capraun. Council concurred and approved the proposal.

Speed signs for CR561 and CR48 – Budget Impact \$14,250 (Infrastructure Fund)

Mayor Natale explained that the rationale for placing these permanent signs at the three entrances to the Town would reduce speed levels. This would free up the amount of time officers sit at the side of the road watching motorists go by and be redirected to other duties. When asked, Chief Hoagland concurred. A straw poll was taken and unanimously approved to add to the budget.

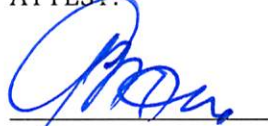
This concluded all discussion on the budget. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Mitchell Mack, Mayor

ATTEST:



Graham Wells, Town Clerk

