

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



**BUDGET WORKSHOP
THURSDAY JULY 16, 2020
TOWN HALL**

Having been duly advertised as required by law, Mayor Mitchell Mack called the Budget Workshop meeting to order at 6.08pm and led the pledge of allegiance

Members Present:

Mitchell Mack, Mayor
Kimberley Kobera
Stephen Cross
Gayle Sikkema

Absent:

Orita Issartel

Also Present:

Graham Wells, Town Clerk
Wally Hoagland, Police Chief

Roll Call was performed, and it was determined that a quorum was present. Mayor Mack asked the Council how they wanted to review the budget; line by line or by specific sections. Councilor Cross suggested that as it should be very similar to last year, that we skim through it and focus on differences from last year. He also asked about the purchasing of the furniture and equipment for the new community building. Mayor Mack said that there was nothing in the budget to cover those costs at this time. Clerk Wells said that it would be funded from the infrastructure fund if there was any money left. Park impact fees could be used but they are limited as the plan was to use the fund to pay the debt service.

Clerk Wells went over the revenues and said that the increase in Ad Valorem of \$53,865.00 was partially negated by a projected revenue reduction for State Revenue Sharing of \$40,500 and \$22,800 in Sales Tax, meaning that we have gone backward by \$9,435. Once the State have put their estimations on their website, we will have a better idea of how the revenues will be for the coming year. There are two full months to go before the preliminary budget hearing to measure the revenues going forward. At this time, a surplus of just \$1,694.00 is being forecasted.

He then went over the individual expenses by department and stated that there were no wage increases for staff in the budget. If revenue projections improve, then Council can look at it again. The Christmas bonus was also removed from the budget. Insurance for the new community building had been overlooked and would need to be added to the budget; preliminary estimate from FL League of Cities is \$2,950.

Discussion took place on the additional hours for the Public Works Technician to bring him up to but not over 40 hours per week. The Clerk was charged with checking the legality with the attorney. During last years budget discussion, additional hours were missed to bring Officer LeJeunesse's hours from 63 per pay period to 72. This change has been incorporated in this year's budget with the corresponding payroll tax and retirement contribution totaling \$3,722.00.

The Mayor also brought up that he wanted to do something special for the Police Chief as he has served twenty-five years with the town. He proposed a small increase to his salary of \$3,287 or 4.8% plus payroll and retirement. The Clerk said that this brings his salary up to the same level as he was paid which was appropriate for a department head. It also keeps his salary on par with his peers in other towns.

Clerk Wells stated that there was no increase in the health insurance premium from Florida Blue. Councilman Cross stressed that health insurance along with retirement were a benefit to the employee and asked that the Clerk provide an annual statement of wages and benefits to the employees.

The costs for operating the water system (522) was put into the budget as an expense but there was no revenue to offset it. The rate for solid waste (524) is the same as last year and is budgeted at 95%. The tax collector also takes 2% to collect the money and Beth Harvey costs \$350.00 to prepare the TRIM. The expenses for the new community building (572) are based on town hall and a corresponding amount is in the revenues. Councilman Cross suggested that a reserve fund be created to cover future expenses.

The Transportation fund revenues for gas taxes and State Revenue Sharing have been marked down against the previous year due to Covid 19. Forty percent of the Public Works Technicians wage for mowing the Right-of-Way are in expenses. There are funds budgeted for minor repairs, signage, millings etc. but nothing for road paving.

The infrastructure revenues have also been reduced and on the expenses side, an Adaptive Security Appliance and the replacement of the Clerks Computer have been budgeted for. There is also an amount for the lease payments on two police vehicles. The final payment for the Polaris will be made in this Fiscal Year. \$17,500 has been included for interest on the loan for the community building and the balancing figure between revenues and expenses goes towards repaying the debt.

Clerk Wells said that he would monitor the revenues and expenses and would continue to update the budget document prior to the next workshop. Councilwoman Sikkema brought up the issue of the Christmas bonus that was taken out. It was agreed to look at this in December. If revenues recover, then Council can look at raises for staff before the budget is finalized.

This concluded all discussion on the budget. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Mitchell Mack, Mayor

ATTEST:



Graham Wells, Town Clerk

