



TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY Budget Meeting March 16, 2021 6:00 PM Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Allen called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Chairman Mayor Steve Allen
Vice Chairman Roger Jackson
Committee Member Tim Adkins
Committee Member Daniel Anderson
Committee Member Gerald Greer
Committee Member Chris Kerrigan
Committee Member JT Smith

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Committee Member Anderson, seconded by Committee Member Greer, to approve the agenda. All approved by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. September 15, 2020 Budget Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Committee Member Anderson, seconded by Committee Member Kerrigan, to approve the Budget Meeting Minutes. All approved by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

2. Architecture Review

Mr. Josh Wright stated he requested to be here tonight to provide some updates. He further stated we are waiting on USDA and have been proactive on the front end and have everything ready as far as bid documentation. Further, once approved by USDA and anything that is added they request Ms. Kellie Reed will review and forward the documents to Ms. Noe for review as well. He stated Vance has stated many time they are not the fastest, but they have the best rates. Vice Mayor Anderson stated the cost has went up as well with lumber being insane. Mr. Wright stated he has calculated contingency in the budget, but we don't how to budget for a worldwide pandemic. Councilman Greer questioned if there is any possibility of costs going down. Mr. Wright stated there has been talk about the President getting rid of the tariffs on imports, which would help with lumber. Vice Mayor Anderson questioned the timeline and if Vance gets everything done with USDA if it is possible around the first of May. Mr. Wright stated USDA has architect and engineering reviews of their own and there are about two hundred pages of plans to review so he can't be sure. City Attorney Ms. Jennifer Noe stated this may be a good time to bring up that Council voted on the property swap agreement and it stated the county would make space available for council meetings and court proceedings until January 2023; however, the county mayor is not willing to go past July 2022. She further stated we discussed this at the Department Head meeting this morning and we will be discussing further with Ms. Melissa about the potential to utilize the Senior Center. We are set to close on April 15, but the hold up is the date on this. She stated she would like to further discuss this with Ms. Melissa to get a plan B ironed out. Councilman Adkins questioned if they will vote on it at the April meeting since they met last night. Ms. Noe replied they were suppose to discuss at their meeting this month; however, she has emailed the attorney to see if they can have a video

conference to iron things out. Mayor asked if there was anything further and having nothing everyone thanked Mr. Wright for attending and giving an update.

3. Arbor Loop Adjustment

Ms. Gayle Bowman stated in the paperwork she handed out they will see a request for an adjustment of eight (8) dwellings and the cost of an average bill. The meter was read incorrectly for several months which caused the issue. The meter reader refused to pay the bill and she will have this on the agenda for vote at the next Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

4. Meter Read Agreement

Ms. Bowman reported we will not be renewing our meter read agreement and discussed the town has purchased handheld devices. Further, our agreement stated we would purchase these devices during the term of the original agreement, but we did not uphold this part of the agreement and are just now getting this handled.

Ms. Reed stated Ms. Noe is here tonight for an attorney/client privilege meeting and asked if mayor and council would like to do that before we continue with budget discussion. Mayor responded yes and at 6:17 p.m. stated the meeting will be in recess for the attorney/client privilege meeting. Mayor called the meeting back to order at 7:07 p.m.

5. 2021-2022 Budget Discussion

Ms. Bowman stated the purpose of this discussion is to provide some information and find out what council wishes to see for the budget this year. She provided information on property taxes and cost of living raises. After much discussion they requested Ms. Bowman provide projections for cost of living raises for two, three, and four percent (2%,3%, and 4%) as well as provide numbers for a property tax of fifty three cents (\$0.53) with examples of how much this will cost for various properties in the city limits.

6. 2019-2020 Audit Discussion

Ms. Bowman went over the 2019-2020 audit. She stated it took additional time due to the new auditors and their findings. She further reported she cannot discuss the active investigation at this time as it is ongoing.

OTHER

Mayor stated if anyone has any questions or would like to see anything further to let us know as we are working on the budget and we will try to have it prepared.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Committee Member Greer, seconded by Committee Member Smith, to adjourn the meeting. All approved by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

MAYOR STEVE ALLEN

CITY RECORDER KELLIE REED, CMFO, CMC