

Town of Maggie Valley
Budget Workshop
February 10, 2009
Minutes

Members Present: Mayor Roger McElroy, Aldermen: Saralyn Price and Colin Edwards
Staff Present: Manager Tim Barth, Chief Scott Sutton, Planning Director Nathan Clark, Building Inspector Ron Mercier, Public Works Director Mike Mehaffey, Finance Director Shayne Wheeler, and Town Clerk Vickie Best
Others Present: June Johnson

The Workshop took place in the conference room at Town Hall beginning at 9: 12 a.m.

Alderman Edwards, a member of the Haywood County Recreational Committee, informed Council that County Commissioner Kirk Kirkpatrick was able to obtain \$10,000 to go toward paying for a master plan to be created for the Jonathan Creek Recreational Park. Haywood County needs an additional \$10,000. There is still some funding left in the MVTDA 1% allocations. Alderman Edwards asked that \$5,000 of the TDA Funding be earmarked to help pay for the master plan.

Alderman Price, also a board member of the Maggie Valley Chamber of Commerce, explained how the Chamber is low on funds and the TDA only refunds money after all the invoices have been paid. "This creates a hardship for the Chamber."

Mayor McElroy, also the chair of the MVTDA 1% committee, stated that they will have HCTDA Director Collins come to the next meeting to discuss the process for funding. Mayor McElroy stated that the Haywood Advancement Foundation draws more interest than Maggie Valley on their funds. Finance Director Wheeler explained that State Law prohibits public funds to be invested, if the bank is not collateralized. Generally, banks that are collateralized, offer security, rather than an increased interest rate.

There was \$12,685 that Haywood County found in discoveries. The collection rate for Maggie Valley to date is 89.43%. Ghost Town owes \$31,000, which is reflected in the collection rate. Ms. Wheeler was confident that the collection rate would go to 98% by the end of the fiscal year.

Manager Barth stated that the town has allocated funds for PARTF grant match, in the event, that Maggie Valley is awarded funding to improve Parham Park. If the grant is not awarded, those funds will go in reserves.

Speaking of Parham Park, Alderman Price informed Council that the Lions' Club is going to raise money to donate to improving Parham Park. Alderman Price asked that Manager Barth and Director Clark attend the next Lions' Club meeting.

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The Maggie Valley Civic Association is going to contribute money toward making the park handicap accessible.

Staff will be applying to the Pigeon River Fund for river decking. The application will be focused on water quality, impervious paving, rain gardens, etc.

The funding allocated to sidewalk maintenance will not be spent until early spring.

Powell Bill dollars will be spent to pave Riverside Drive. Trees will be removed, and manholes will be added as part of the paving process.

Alderman Edwards asked that the sidewalk repairs begin as soon as possible. There are several places along Soco Road in need of repair. Director Mehaffey explained that the Town normally does not repair sidewalks in front of businesses, due to delivery trucks continually breaking down the concrete. The police or public works departments address the issue whenever they see a truck parked on the sidewalk. If the town fixed those areas in front of businesses that continue to allow big trucks to park on the sidewalk, the line item, in the budget would double. It is more expensive to fix entrances than just regular strait sidewalk. The town has charged business owners in the past that have allowed big trucks to break up the sidewalk. This will be addressed in this year's newsletter. The owner pays for the concrete, and the town provides the labor.

Mayor McElroy wanted to prioritize roads and begin providing more road maintenance.

Discussion on the 2009/10 Budget

Building Inspections:

Building has declined in Maggie Valley the same as the rest of the nation. Since January, only one new building permit has been issued.

Alderman Edwards questioned Inspector Mercier on how he spends his time when not doing inspections. Mr. Mercier has been studying for upcoming classes.

Manager Barth informed Council that Mr. Mercier is also doing code enforcement. He has taken on the over grown lot enforcement (Nuisance Ordinance). Mr. Mercier has also created a minimum housing code that would allow Council to get rid of dilapidated structures. It provides the town the authority to tear down a structure and charge the owner the expense.

Mayor McElroy stated that he wanted something done about the old water slide hanging out over the bank on Soco Road.

The concrete is part of the flume, but the old decking can be removed.

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Alderman Price asked that something be done about the overgrown lot adjacent to her home. This could be considered a health issue due to the standing water. Frogs are taking over the entire area.

The Country Club has hired an engineer to address how to fill the area so that the land is useable.

The town had to purchase a new heater for the pavilion. The one that was donated was only 60% efficient. The cost of operating the heater during the winter, while the pavilion is being rented, would very quickly consume the allocated funds for heat. The heater will be connected to a separate gas line and tank other than the one the Civic Association has and pays for.

Public Works refurbished the lights that were taken out of Town Hall during the renovation and installed them in the pavilion. That was great savings for the Town.

Alderman Edwards stated that shingles are popping up on the roof of Town Hall. The sheeting and all should be replaced. This project will hopefully be completed in the 2009/10 budget year. When the process begins, both the cost of tin and shingles will be explored.

Planning Department

The 2009-10 professional services line item will decrease since the Brannon Forest Subdivision lawsuit is over. The only items in professional services for 2009/10 should be to McGill Associates for writing a grant and to N.C. Community Services for their assistance to the Planning Board.

Director Clark explained that Haywood County's GEO Blocks (mapping) is antiquated and they are having difficulties transitioning to another program. County employees cannot get the program to provide layers of information needed for mapping. Haywood County is making this transition in-house, which is delaying the finished product.

The cost of maps is very expensive. If Maggie Valley could produce maps, it would not take long for the program to pay for it's self, and staff could be sure the maps are accurate.

Mayor McElroy asked that the design standards not be introduced to the public until mid-spring, so that everyone is back for the season. "We need as much public input as possible."

Sewer /Public Works Department

The electric project at the festival grounds is almost complete.

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There are a couple of sewer projects scheduled such as 450-feet of sewer line extension up Rocky Top Road and 150-feet of sewer line extension up Springlakes Road. The Rocky Top Road project will cost approximately \$25,000. The Springlakes Road project will cost approximately \$10,000.

The Haywood EMC sewer project will now cross Jonathan Creek (approximately 5-feet under the creek bed). This will be a great benefit to Maggie Valley because access to municipal sewer will then be provided in the Hemphill water shed. This will bring capacity to approximately 100-homes.

The annual state mandated sewer line cleaning will cost between \$30,000 and \$35,000. Maggie Valley has 54-miles of sewer line. The state mandates that 10% of lines be cleaned and repaired annually. There is an additional \$8,000 in repairs to complete this fiscal year. The pricing is the same as last year, .80¢ per foot to clean and .80¢ per foot for filming. This information is also beneficial when applying for grant funding.

The treatment plant expansion is moving forward. HEMC is installing electric to the new area today. The contractor was going to charge \$11,000 to \$12,000 for this change order. The work is being done in-house with the help of HEMC at a much cheaper cost.

A brief discussion followed pertaining to purchasing additional land at the treatment plant. Council asked that Mr. Mehaffey discuss this with the property owner to see if there is any interest in selling additional land.

Mr. Holt retires March 13 and will come off payroll April 30, 2009. Dave Holt was the Town's mechanic. Not having an in-house mechanic will affect the police department more than any other department.

As always, additional labor will be needed during the summer to help with weed eating and mowing. The town mows approximately 30-acres, not including roadsides. The Public Works Department needs to replace one of the z-mowers. The Toro mower is under state contract. The mower mows 9.7 MPH and has a two-year warranty.

The tractor is also worn out. The size of tractor that the town needs does not offer a cab.

The sidewalk sweeper is worn out as well.

The town can purchase a bucket mounted compactor for between \$15,000 and \$19,000. The compactor compacts to 95% compaction. This would be a great benefit for doing roadwork.

Council suggested putting the public works department equipment on a rotation schedule.

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The Villa La' Bre project will use most of the money in the coming year. After the Rural Center grant, the town's share is \$40,000.

As for sewer impact fees, the flows are based on state figures. Years ago, the tap fees were based on the type of business. The current fees are based on what replacement costs are today. Council felt the impact fees were not a deterrent to new businesses.

The town did operate under a development agreement but several years ago did away with that policy. Mayor McElroy was interested in reinstating the development agreement. The developer would be reimbursed for others connecting to the lines installed by the developer.

Police Department

Approximately 34% of the fuel line item has been spent to date.

Chief Sutton has applied for grant funding for new weapons, and in-car cameras, which have now become a regular function in District Court. The cameras cost approximately \$4600 and the life span is debatable.

Chief Sutton discussed the Council of Governments desires to create a DRUG TASK FORCE amount the municipalities and County. The next cycle for applying for money to fight drugs is October 2010.

Mayor McElroy would like funds to be sought from Raleigh to help fight drugs in Haywood County.

The workshop adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Mayor Roger McElroy

Vickie Best, CMC, Town Clerk

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