



# TOWN OF HAYMARKET TOWN COUNCIL

## WORK SESSION ~ MINUTES ~

Danielle Kijewski, Clerk of Council  
<http://www.townofhaymarket.org/>

15000 Washington St  
Haymarket, VA 20169

Monday, May 22, 2017

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

A Work Session of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Haymarket, VA, was held this evening in the Board Room, commencing at 6:00 PM.

Mayor David Leake called the meeting to order.

### 1. Call to Order

Councilman John Cole: Present, Councilman Chris Morris: Present, Vice Mayor Joe Pasanello: Present, Councilwoman Susan Edwards: Present, Councilman Connor Leake: Present, Councilman Steve Aitken: Present, Mayor David Leake: Present, Town Manager Kimberly Murray: Present, Town Treasurer Roberto Gonzalez: Present, Clerk of Council Danielle Kijewski: Present, Chief of Police Kevin Lands: Present.

### 2. Agenda Items

#### A. Discussion: FY2017/2018 Town Budget

Mayor Leake shares that he has called for this work session in order to consider and address citizens' comments from earlier meetings and Public Hearings on this budget.

He suggests that those Council Members who have submitted comments should present them, point by point, and the Council can vote whether to enact each suggestion. The same procedure will be applied to comments submitted by residents in earlier meetings.

Mr. Cole raises the matter of the raised real estate tax rate for the debt service.

He does not think that the project is adequately planned to justify borrowing money at this stage.

The project may take so long, that taxes could be raised in another financial year.

This year's REA tax will not be collected until December, and he does not want the Town to spend ahead.

Vice-Mayor Pasanello proposes a list of budget cuts that would not impact the Town's services or operations.

#### Eliminate the Town Administration's discretionary fund. (\$2,500)

Mr. Morris thinks that it should be allocated, but not given away; it should be used for unforeseen incidentals.

Mrs. Edwards agrees.

Vice-Mayor Pasanello says that in the last year, \$1,500 of this fund has been given away in circumstances of charity.

Mr. Aitken reminds the Council that the Town has a stated policy of charitable giving, and that the Council should revisit it, if it would like to take a new direction in the future.

Mr. Leake would like to see the fund kept in place, but agrees with Mr. Aitken that the policy should be revisited; in the mean while, he suggests that the Council might consider a cap on charitable giving within the discretionary fund.

Roll Call: Pasanello and Cole are in favor of eliminating the fund, while Leake, Aitken, Edwards and Morris think that it should be kept for the time being.

Eliminate the stipend for Council.

Mr. Cole says that this matter had been raised in earlier years, and the former Town Attorney advised that due to some reference in the State Code, the Council Members cannot serve without compensation.

Pasanello says that previous Council had considered reducing the number of meetings as an alternative.

Cole would be in favor of reducing the stipend to one meeting's worth.

Morris reminds the Council that the many small subcommittees that used to meet are no longer necessary, so there are fewer meetings taking place than in former years, regardless.

Aitken would keep this compensation. If it is reduced, it would be difficult to raise it later; everyone's time is valuable, and this may reduce interest in public service within the Town in the future.

Mr. Leake says that the Council should cut this item before it proposes any cuts to the public safety budget.

Roll Call: Pasanello, Cole, and Leake vote to eliminate the stipend, while Morris, Edwards, and Aitken vote to keep it. Mayor Leake breaks the tie in favor of keeping it.

#### Reducing the Mayor's stipend.

Roll Call: Mr. Leake would be in favor of reducing this item by 50%; Pasanello, Cole, Morris, Edwards, and Aitken vote to keep the item as is.

#### Increase health insurance contributions by Town Staff.

Mayor Leake reminds the Council that because of rising premiums, Town Staff will already be paying more for their health insurance in order for the Town to break even on this item.

Aitken thinks that increasing the item at this stage would be unfair to Staff.

Roll Call: Pasanello, Morris, Cole, Aitken, Leake, and Edwards all vote to leave the item as it is.

#### Reduce Meals & Lodging for Town Staff (\$5,000)

The items for Meals & Lodging and Education & Conventions are tied together, so must be discussed together.

Ms. Murray reminds those present that this covers items for Town Staff, not for Council. Her contract requires that her professional certifications be kept up; this could take up half of the allocated funds for this item, and there are other staff members to consider. The reason that this line item was not used this year was that the Staff was not present, not because it was not needed.

Roll Call: Pasanello votes to eliminate this item; Morris, Edwards, Aitken, and Leake vote to leave it as it is.

Cole: the corresponding item for the Council may be cut as an alternative.

#### Reduce Meals & Lodging and Education & Conventions for Town Council (the two items total \$6,500)

Cole suggests cutting \$2,000 proportionally from the two items.

Aitken would support, but thinks that those present must consider future Councils and their educational needs.

Roll Call: Edwards votes to leave the item as is; Leake, Morris, Cole, Pasanello, and Aitken vote to cut \$2,000 from the combined total.

#### Reduce Capital Outlay for Police Vehicles

Pasanello proposes reducing the number of new police vehicles to 3; he thinks that they are nice to have, but not necessary with the current program of bicycle and foot patrolling by Town Officers.

Mayor Leake asks when opinions changed on this matter, as it was decided and allocated publicly over the course of the last few months.

Morris says that the process was imperfect, and suggests that it could be improved in the future. He says that poor procedures leave the Town vulnerable to criticism, and suggests that the Council be vigilant in this matter, but supports the Chief's vision.

Pasanello agrees. The deliberations and decisions of the Finance Committee, though public, take place largely outside of public consciousness; Council Continuation Meetings and Work Sessions do not include Citizens' Time for public comment. The Town must make an effort to be transparent in matters such as this purchase.

Edwards says that she was initially skeptical of this purchase, but that the Chief's reasoning has changed her mind.

Morris asks what financial impact would result from the hypothetical loss of two cars; Chief passes out a financial analysis sheet. 5/10 items purchased would be lost, as would the cost of labor. It would also cost \$1,000 to downfit each car for return. The Town would lose \$13,004.60 for the two cars, and would still need to pay the downfitting costs.

Mayor Leake thinks that the Council must trust the choices of its professionals - he trusts the Chief's choice for this purchase.

Chief tells the Council that he will never propose any purchase that he does not think the Town needs. Prince William County's 650 officers do not need 650 cars, but in a small town, all officers must have the necessary resources; the Police Department exists for contingencies in which things go bad.

Roll Call: Pasanello votes to reduce the fleet by 2 new cars; Cole, Morris, Edwards, Aitken, and Leake vote to leave the item as it is.

#### Cap the Architectural Review Board and the Planning Commission at 5 members each, possibly enacted through attrition as terms expire.

Leake reminds those present that liaisons from the other Boards are necessary to the ARB, so this would reduce it to 3 appointed members and 2 liaisons. He thinks that there should be as much diversity and input to the Planning Commission as possible, so that it can consider many perspectives when making decisions that affect the future of the Town.

Morris asks whether the ARB is affected by the lack of knowledge resulting from the absence of a professional member.

Edwards says that it does.

Aitken suggests capping the boards at 5 members, and then revisiting the matter when someone decides to quit service on the Planning Commission.

Cole says that if this goes forward, the Council may be accused of trying to keep someone from serving later on.

Morris says that with a Board of 5 members, collusion and vote manipulation would be very easy, since only 3 would be needed for a majority.

Roll Call: Cole and Pasanello vote to cap the membership of each Board at 5; Morris, Edwards, Aitken, and Leake vote to leave the number as it is.

Reduce vehicle fuel through re-consideration of the Police Department's take-home program

Morris would like to see justification for why the take-home program and consequent fuel consumption should remain as-is.

Edwards believes the program should be kept.

Aitken suggests that this is a matter that should not be decided in one meeting, to save money.

Roll Call: Pasanello votes to change the program, while Morris, Leake, Aitken, Edwards, and Cole vote to leave it for the time being.

Eliminate the salary for a part-time Administrative Assistant for the Police Department (\$20,000).

Chief Lands says that the Administrative Assistant's current hours are 8-4, and going part-time would mean a reduction in hours from 10-3. Chief and Sergeant Shaver could pick up administrative duties between them; Chief would be willing to try this arrangement.

Edwards asks how this would impact the Town's efforts to re-brand its Police Department; people would need to wait in order to be helped.

Morris says that a part-time administrative assistant would fit into long-term plans for the Town Center, but does not necessarily think that now is the time to make this change - what if, after 3 months, the Chief decides that this arrangement is not practical?

Aitken suggests that the Department not fill the position at present, but should keep the money as a placeholder.

Cole reminds the Council that the object of this meeting is to reduce the budget.

Roll Call: Aitken, Edwards, and Leake vote to keep the funds allocated for this position as they are, while Morris, Cole, and Pasanello vote to eliminate the item. Mayor Leake breaks the tie in favor of leaving the funds as they are.

Eliminate the funds allocated for Debt Service.

Murray says that the loss of trained, professional staff due to a poor work environment will cost much more than a \$45,000 debt payment, as it would cost more than \$100,000 to renovate the administrative space, which has been a priority to complete for the last 6 months. The Town cannot get a loan for the Town Center redevelopment until it has bids, and cannot call for bids until it has a final site plan. The plan for completing the project is there, but budget work has prevented Town staff from preparing a public presentation as yet.

Roll Call: Pasanello votes to cut these funds, while Aitken, Edwards, Morris, and Leake vote to keep them as they are. Cole abstains.

Harrover Master Plan (Haymarket Community Park)

In a previous work session, Council suggested allocating \$75,000 to this line item from the Town's reserves.

Edwards reminds Council that an \$80,000 contribution is required as the Town's match for the Pedestrian Improvement Project.

Murray says that she has learned that the Town did not sign a contract with its chosen engineering firm for this project; she suggests using a local firm to make the money go further. She also suggests re-examining the Town's reserve policy of 30%.

Roll Call: the Council votes unanimously to leave this item as it is.

#### Citizens' Concerns and Comments from Public Hearings

*'Luxury Positions' and Council Stipends:* Morris has requested financial actuals from the Town Treasurer, and in actuality, both these items have been reduced.

*Alleged Doubling of Police Budget:* Morris says that, though the Police Department now provides 24/7 service to residents, its budget has not actually doubled. The total amount quoted in the comment included the budget for all Public Works.

*Legal Fees:* Procedures have changed in the last year to curtail spending in this area; Pasanello points out that there was a great deal of Town-involved litigation in former years, requiring more legal advice.

Morris shares from the financial actuals that all areas are going down in the legal expenses.

Murray reminds Council to consider legal costs when they make decisions and enact policies that require legal advice.

Roll Call: Leake votes to reduce the number of hours of legal services from 90 to 80, while Pasanello, Aitken, Edwards, Cole, and Morris vote to leave the item as it is.

*Abolish the Town's Police Department:* Chief Lands says that Prince William County's police force is down by 150 officers, and that those present tend to focus on the high-crime areas in other parts of the county. They depend upon Haymarket's officers to assist in the Western part of the county.

Cole says that if the Police Department is abolished, then the Town must be unincorporated, since it will be unable to provide basic services to its residents.

There is no support for this suggestion amongst members of the Council.

*Consideration of the way that an expected right-in, right-out traffic pattern will affect the Town's meals tax revenue:* Pasanello says that traffic analysis would not provide the basis for such a suggestion.

Cole asks whether the budget has accounted for the loss of gas while SHEETZ is under construction in the summer.

Murray answers that it has.

*Loss of BPOL revenue as result of state-level legislation:* Cole says that this is not expected to happen within the next year, so it can be considered later.

Pasanello reminds Council that the General Assembly's proposed change to the BPOL this winter was roundly defeated.

#### *Recruiting a part-time, rather than a full-time Town Planner:*

Murray says that the lack of a full-time Planner means a longer permitting process, less staff support and less thorough reports to assist the Town Board. The Boards need more support and education to make sound decisions, and a full-time Planner would be able to assist in this. The full-time Planner would also be able to address the blighted properties, sign and Town Code violations, and do project management work, like updating the Comprehensive Plan, additional zoning text amendments, and managing the Gateway Sign Project; the part-time Planner is unable to address these matters.

#### **4. Documents Submitted for Inclusion in the Public Record**

1. Notes Submitted for Discussion by Vice-Mayor J. Pasanello