

MINUTES
City of Dillon Budget Workshop
May 22, 2023

The May 22, 2023 Budget Workshop of the City Council was held at the City-County Complex located at 401 W. Main Street, Dillon, SC. Notices of this Budget Workshop of City Council was provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location, and time of the meeting.

Councilmembers in attendance:

Mayor Tally McColl

Councilmember Dr. Phil Wallace

Councilmember James Washington

Councilmember Douglas Jackson

Mayor Pro Tem Timothy Cousar

Councilmember Jay David

Councilmember Johnny Eller

- I. **Call to Order** - Mayor McColl called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Dr. Wallace also gave the invocation.

- II. **Approval of Agenda**
Councilmember Eller made a motion to approve the agenda but add Citizens Report after the General Fund discussion. Councilmember Cousar seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- III. **Budget for 2023-2024**
Glen said everyone has a copy of the proposed budget with the \$5,000 increase for the police department. This is a balanced budget. Includes 3% increase in sanitation rates. This budget also includes a 3-mil tax increase. The budget also includes \$438,000 in capital purchases. This is for the purchase of a police vehicle (\$55,000) and police department new equipment (\$25000). We need a pick-up truck in the street department (\$45,000), a knuckle boom loader (\$225,000), a truck for the Recreation department (\$36,000), Gator for recreation (\$14,000), a mower for recreation (\$18,000) and field maintenance machine for recreation (\$20,000). The \$438000 to be used from depreciation account.

Councilmember Eller asked did we just buy a knuckle boom loader? Burt responded what we have is a 03, 09, and 16. The other two we flip flop on which one is running. Councilmember David asked which one are we replacing. Burt said the 09 is in better shape than the 03. Burt said our trucks are like 16/17 years old. We are trying to add a reliable truck to the fleet. Councilmember Eller asked can we buy recreation stuff with the hospitality money? He said we have talked about police officer salaries you are proposing \$5000 and I just feel like if we can give them an additional \$2000 to make it a \$7000 increase all I'm asking is \$55000. Glen said the recreation items you are talking about is a one-time cost. The salary is not a one-time cost that is an ongoing cost. Councilmember Eller said I understand I just want us to be competitive and we aren't right now but three or four of our officers are inquiring about the state police. I am hearing that other officers are inquiring as well. If we can find \$55000 to get us up to \$38000 other municipalities are paying \$40,000, I'm afraid they will go to them. Glen said I have no issue if you want to do. Councilmember Eller said I'm trying to get us to where we are competitive. Glen asked

if council is ok with the 5% on the milage instead of the 3%. Mayor said every time we help on this side we are taxing on the other side. Councilmember Eller said we have to protect the citizens. This year it's a different ballgame. We are talking about the sergeants that are inquiring about leaving. I'm thinking about the citizens and the Chief is doing everything he can. We need to try to keep what we have. Mayor Pro Tem Cousar asked Chief Lane if we gave them that kind of money do you think the other officers will come back? Chief Lane said most of the ones that left got out of the profession or didn't live in this county. I have one that went to the highway patrol we can't even compete with that. Chief Lane said I would like to think so but I don't know. Councilmember Eller said can we use the ARP money as a bargaining tool as a bonus. Councilmember David said if I felt like it was keeping officers, I would understand I just don't want to have an unnecessary burden on the taxpayers for something that we can't control. A year and half ago we increased it \$3000 and now you are talking about increasing it \$7000 more. Mayor McColl said do you think if we had done this 4 weeks ago you would you still have those officers? Chief Lane responded possibly. Councilmember David said he thought the ultimate goal was to equal what the county pays, what are we chasing now? I'm confused on what we are trying to gain? I'm concerned about keeping them and concerned about it being on the back of the taxpayers. Mayor McColl said if we do such a big increase in salaries, it would be hard to come back next year. Councilmember David said if we don't do it in a responsible manner, we are going to shoot ourselves in the foot. Councilmember David asked Chief Lane what does he think? Chief Lane said he doesn't know what to expect at this point. Every agency in the Pee Dee is looking for officers. Councilmember David said raising taxes doesn't solve our problem and if it's not going to keep officers then I have a problem with it. Glen said he's going to add 6-mils instead of 3-mils in the budget. Our final reading will be the last week in June. If I can come up with another alternative I will. He continued saying nobody wants taxes increased but if you are going to increase them, they want to know why. Dr. Wallace said we need to look at a patrolman dedicated to Commerce and by the hotels. That portion is important to our revenue stream and we need to protect that area. We need someone out there all of the time and I think we can cut out some of that drug activity over there. Councilmember David asked Chief Lane how does he feel about the increases as far as the longevity of the officers. Chief Lane said we need to retain the officers that have been here and not just the new recruits. The starting pay is what everybody looks at. Councilmember Eller said when you have a police sergeant and two investigators leaving it concerns him. Councilmember David asked across the board \$7,000 for the police department will that suffice. Chief Lane said we are just really trying to keep what we have and be competitive. Councilmember David said he just wants to be fair. Councilmember Eller said he wants to think about the \$1200 pay increase and look at the people who work in the service department for Burt those are the lowest paid people. They are making about \$14 per hour can you at least give those people \$2000 raise?

IV. Citizens Report

Songa Wynn said would you want that job for that kind of money, no. It's a tough job. It's a dangerous job. The problem is they have to live in it. You can barely go to the store anymore without anything happening. Think about the people that have to go to these incidents. These are the things that we are thinking about. It's pathetic it really is what about these officers' life. Dr. Wallace said if we pay them \$100,000 year, they still have to do that job. Angie said what is

your incentive to do their job. Dr. Wallace said your health. Sanitation is important as well as police officers. They don't pick up trash anymore they overlook it. It's sad that you don't have enough sanitation workers and McDonalds are paying people \$15 per hour. I'm paying a service to pick up trash when sanitation come to mow the trash they mow right over the trash because they don't care. Dr. Wallace said people need to care. Angie said sanitation people aren't picking up trash. Sanitation people need raises as well. Dr Wallace said as a business owner you cannot buy loyalty. Angie said loyalty comes out of respect. Dr. Wallace said exactly right I have to gain respect. Wallace said we can make a motion to adjourn. Courser second motion passed. 7:49pm

V. **Adjourn**

With no further business to discuss, Dr. Wallace made a motion to adjourn. The motion passed 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:49pm.

Approved: _____

N. Tally McCon, Mayor

Tina Scott, Council Clerk

Date Approved: _____

6/5/23