

Town of Swansboro
Board of Commissioners
March 14, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Mayor John Davis, Mayor Pro Tem William Justice, Commissioner Jeffrey Conaway, Commissioner Joseph Brown, Commissioner Douglas Eckendorf and Commissioner Pat Turner.

Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Pledge

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Mayor Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance. The purpose of the meeting was for discussion/direction of the FY 23/24 year end projections and FY 24/25 Budget requests.

FY 23/24-year end projections and FY 24/25 Budget

Interim Manager Jon Barlow shared that he had met with each department head and was working to go through all the budgets. Preliminary projections for FY 23/24 estimated that the General Fund expenditures would exceed revenues by approximately \$217,174, the Stormwater Enterprise Fund revenues would exceed expenditures by \$8,901, and the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund revenues would exceed expenditures by \$7,953. The budgets for Governing Body, Legal, Fire, and Permitting were all identified as potentially over budget due to salaries, legal fees, emergency repairs, and board direction to change event cost.

In looking at the FY 24/25 Budget, Finance Director Sonia Johnson shared that the county had provided preliminary projections for ad-valorem taxes at collection rate of 98.70%. Revenues were estimated at \$6,539,833. The requested expenditures and accounting for a 5% increase on medical/dental insurance, 10% increase on property liability and workman's comp, and incorporating a 3.4% COLA, expenditures were \$8,436,421. That was an excess of expenditure over revenue of \$1,896,588. Preliminary projections for both the Stormwater Enterprise fund and Solid Waste fund would be net zero.

Mrs. Johnson reviewed the following departmental requests for personnel Capital Improvements, Capital Reserves and Capital Outlay.

- Personnel Request totaled \$378,455
 - o Police – 2 officers, 1 lieutenant
 - o Fire – 3 firefighters (January – June)
 - o Parks & Rec – Recreation Coordinator
- CIP/Capital Reserve Requests totaled \$343,500
 - o Fire – Apparatus replacement & equipment
 - o Police – vehicles

- Parks & Recreation – Property acquisition, Waterfront implementation, Tennis court resurfacing, Municipal Park Tol Lot repairs, and fitness equipment
- Capital Outlay totaled \$478,000
 - Police – Police Interceptor
 - Emergency Management – Festival crosswalks
 - Public Work – Non CDL vac truck

Interim Manager Barlow shared that the goal of net zero with no usage of Fund balance would require more edits and cuts to the departments.

In response to inquiries from the board the following details were clarified by the appropriate department head.

- Public Works needed the CDL vac truck more than it needed new personnel
- Fire Department personnel request was not full time due to awarded grants that funded part of the salaries
- Police department vehicle request was due to the loss of a vehicle due to an accident
- Parks & Recreation property acquisition request were part of the established Parks & Rec Master plan, in the event that property became available for purchase
- Parks & Recreation fitness room equipment was over 10 years old and desires to replace 1 piece a year.

Board Comments

Commissioner Conaway shared that the budget goes up each year and would like to see that trend stop.

Commissioner Eckendorf shared that he would like to see what each department gets from property taxes and inquired if that could be provided by way of a pie graph.

Mayor Davis shared that he has asked for a tax cut each year, along with a salary increase to police and fire. He believes that efficiency of jobs needs to be looked into and should put consideration into some combined jobs.

XIII. Adjournment

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Eckendorf the meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm.