

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL
BUDGET WORK SESSION
MAY 18, 2015

Public Officials Present

Council Vice President Laura Mitchell Councilwoman Eugenie P. Shields
Councilman Timothy K. Spies

Public Officials Not Present

Mayor James Ireton, Jr.
Council President Jacob R. Day
Councilman John "Jack" R. Heath

In Attendance

City Clerk Kim Nichols, Assistant City Administrator Julia Glanz, and Internal Services Director Keith Cordrey

The City Council convened in a Budget Work Session at 9:30 a.m. in Conference Room 306 of the Government Office Building.

Police Personnel Committee

Officers Brandon Caton and Nick Amendolagine from the Salisbury Police Department (SPD) joined Council to discuss the Police department budget. They reported retention of employees remains the principal problem with employment. The following is a synopsis of the discussion:

- Nighttime differential – they make twenty cents and twenty-five cents in their nighttime differential. This amount has not changed since 1988. Any person working the night shift hours is only making twenty cents more per hour. As a comparison, Salisbury University police make \$1 for nighttime differential and they work 12-hour shifts. This increase has been overlooked for about thirty years.
- Non-sworn personnel work very hard and should be recognized, especially dispatchers.
- Funding increased amounts for differential pay would cost \$17,000 - \$25,000 per year
- They started the Police Academy with fourteen people and have lost four already
- Stress levels are high, but most officers are too prideful to take stress leave
- Officers are frustrated because they aren't seeing incremental increases
- One of the officers left to take an eleven thousand dollar pay cut to work somewhere else
- Right now they have ten new officers in the Academy who are basically worthless to the City for the first year
- There is quick burn-out with the new officers during field training

- SPD must field train their new officers quicker than other police departments because there is a lot more going on in Salisbury
- SPF has one of the longest field training programs in the area because when they are cut loose, they have to operate at a much higher level than other neighboring towns
- There are a lot of retirements coming up (in that transitional phase where seniors are looking to retire) and many are concerned about their employee benefit rate at retirement
- Benefits (like gym memberships) could be given to those who stay healthy and use their memberships
- Police Officers and Fire Officers can retire long before they are eligible for Medicare
- Mrs. Mitchell told about House Keys for Employees where \$2,500 is given for down payments for homes in the City
- Having an officer in the neighborhood helps the community
- Mr. Spies commented that providing housing in barracks rent-free for a year or so to new hires would be an attractive incentive to draw officers to Salisbury
- Mrs. Mitchell asked Mr. Cordrey to see what the difference in the SPD's shifted differential would mean to the budget's bottom line, and the 25 cents differential since 1988 was shocking to hear.
- Mrs. Shields wants to see SPF receive a step increase before 2017
- *Council reached consensus to see the differential increased to between eighty cents and a dollar per hour*
- Mrs. Shields indicated Public Safety was the number one concern before new positions should be added. Mrs. Mitchell agreed with Mrs. Shields, but added that it comes down to choices, and Public Safety is always Council's top priority. They just did put \$700,000 into the SPD in 2014 and another million dollars in FY15.
- Mrs. Mitchell asked Mr. Cordrey to find out how many vacation days were forfeited at the SPD over the past three years, and see how many positions are in jeopardy of losing days off.
- Council was concerned with police officers getting their appropriate days off

Planning, Zoning and Community Development (P & Z)

Chief of Planning Keith Hall joined Council to provide an update on the City's form-based code and planning initiatives. The City has a roadmap on land use and has to work out implementation going from a trails', biking and walkers' component. The more the City can define in an adopted plan the easier it will be to obtain State and Federal funding for implementation. More often lately, the State and Federal governments are reluctant to fund "piecemeal" projects but opt to fund plans to totality. These tools could be very beneficial to achieving the City's goals.

Mr. Hall also reported they have a very rough lineation of what an Urban Greenway is, but do not have a plan of what it will be. The Parks Committee should examine the Urban Greenway when creating the Park Master Plan. He recommended the Committee get price estimates when adding that scope for the contract.

Council did not reach consensus for budgeting purposes; the update was for Council's informational purposes only.

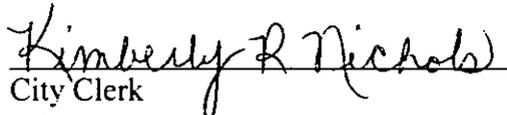
Council Discussion on Follow-up List

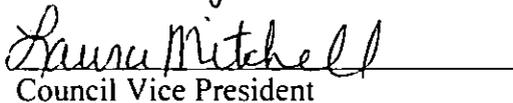
- Community Development Corporation Specialist - Mayor Ireton will discuss this in the afternoon's Work Session.
- Thursday, May 21, 2015 is the final date Council can deliberate because Mr. Cordrey needs time to create the Budget Ordinance and related materials on June 8, 2015.
- Council reached consensus to include the SPD differential (eighty cents to one dollar per hour)
- Workers Comp adjustment is correct per Mr. Cordrey
- Safe Streets position is already funded since the SPD has received the award
- Council reached consensus to not leave the 2% cut in Water & Sewer Rates

Ms. Glanz informed Council that Neighborhood Services and Code Compliance withdrew their request for safety shoes (\$1,000).

The next Budget Session will be held on Thursday, 21, 2015 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

With no further discussion, Mrs. Mitchell adjourned the Budget Work Session at 11:06 p.m.


City Clerk


Council Vice President