

**Town of Urbanna
Town Council
Work Session
Council Chambers-390 Virginia St. Suite B
May 23, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Members of Council

Present

Mayor Bill Goldsmith
Marjorie Austin
Larry Chowning
Alana Courtney
Merri Hanson
Beth Justice
Sandy Sturgill

Others Present

Ted Costin-Town Administrator
Martha Rodenburg-Town Clerk
Members of the public and press

Mayor Goldsmith called the meeting to order at 6:01pm
The mayor recognized Councilmember Chowning on his 75th birthday
All present said the Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Austin made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Councilmember Sturgill seconded.

Austin, Chowning, Courtney, Hanson, Justice, Sturgill, and Goldsmith voted yes

Motion passed 7-0

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Kristi Anzivino presented council with a photo album documenting the construction of the Marshall Family Community Pool.

COUNCIL COMMENT

- Council thanked Ms. Anzivino for the gift.
- Discussion took place about the opening festivities for the Marshall Community Pool, which will take place on May 25 at 11:30am.

PROJECT UPDATES/DISCUSSION

Museum-Security & Fire Alarm

On behalf of Michele Hutton, Mr. Costin gave the background on the research she did regarding replacing the current fire and security system at the museum.

- Current provider is Johnson Controls, has issues maintaining a cellular signal.
- Multiple false alarms, which all have to be responded to.
- Instances of alarm activating, but no call received.

- Located in Hampton, Johnson takes several hours to respond.

Ms. Hutton has received a quote from Starbrite, located in Gloucester, to provide fire and security monitoring at a cost savings of over \$2,000 per year.

Asked by Councilmember Austin why Franktronics couldn't provide the services, Mr. Costin replied he would inquire into it, but believed they couldn't tie into 911 centers.

Mayor Goldsmith commented he was called at least once a week to reset the system.

Council concurred that it would be the right decision to change.

Budget-FY 2024-2025

Mr. Costin presented the draft budget for discussion and thanked the Finance Committee for their assistance.

- The General Fund balance, as proposed, would be \$772,532 and he provided the breakdown of those numbers.
- The Water Fund balance, as proposed, would be \$725,000 and he provided the breakdown of those numbers.
- Other Water Fund Revenue is at \$0, but once a new water ordinance is in place, monies collected for reconnection fees and other water fees will increase that number.
- Water budget based on a 10% increase in in-town water rates; out-of-town rates will remain the same.
 - The gap between the rates needs to be closed in order to be eligible for certain grant money.
- The Taber Fund expenditures and Interest Income balances at \$30,000.
- Upton's Point Marina expenditures and revenue balance at \$71,600.
- Self-funding Community Activities balance at \$12,000.
- DMV Select is at \$0, due to its expected closing.

Mr. Costin spoke to the rationale behind closing the DMV.

- Operates at a loss.
- Town not financially able to meet the requirement for 2 employees to staff location.
 - A \$0.03-0.04 increase in real estate taxes would be required to meet this requirement.
- Under current contract, the town has 31 requirements, 26 sub-requirements, 3 additional requirements; DMV has 5 requirements.

Overtures made to DMV to keep the DMV Select here, but DMV said no.

- Staff seeking permission to advertise schedule for public hearings on budget.
 - Water increase will require separate ordinance and hearing.

Mayor Goldsmith spoke regarding the DMV Select closing and the staffing costs. Normal staffing costs should be 20-30% of revenue. DMV expected us to do it at a rate of 4-5%. Our DMV Select would need to have over \$1 million in revenue to break even. The DMV of Virginia is expecting the taxpayers of Urbanna to subsidize their outlet. He gave the example that, an owner of a \$300,000 home would pay \$100-200 more a year in taxes.

Councilmember Chowning spoke about the Finance Committee discussions, and agreed, while he doesn't want it to go, it's too expensive.

Councilmember Austin commented on the lack of advertising for DMV Select, adding the town isn't a money-making entity, and questioned what services are provided to the taxpayer.

Further discussion took place regarding the matter, with a reminder there would be a public hearing on the budget, and the public will have an opportunity to voice their opinions.

Mayor Goldsmith spoke regarding the in-town water rate increase, noting the town water rates are below average, according to the Draper-Aden report, which tracks small municipality water rates. He emphasized, due to the difference between in-town and out-of-town rates, Urbanna is not eligible for certain water grants through the Virginia Rural Water Authority.

Discussion took place regarding the need to raise rates. Lower than average rates don't show potential lenders and grant providers that we are doing our part to raise money for needed infrastructure upgrades.

Councilmember Austin questioned the thought process for not raising real estate or personal property tax rates. Mayor Goldsmith responded talked about it decided area where highest need in the long term to generate income for water infrastructure.

Additional discussion took place regarding the Finance Committee's rationale behind their recommendations.

Councilmember Austin made a motion to authorize staff to proceed to advertise the proposed Fiscal Year 24-25 Budget.

Councilmember Justice seconded.

Austin, Chowning, Courtney, Hanson, Justice, Sturgill, and Goldsmith voted yes

Motion passed 7-0

Discussion took place from the floor regarding water quality.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no items on the agenda

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Goldsmith reminded everyone of the pool opening on Saturday at 11:30am.

ADJOURN

Councilmember Austin made a motion to adjourn.


Councilmember Justice seconded.

Austin, Chowning, Courtney, Hanson, Justice, Sturgill, and Goldsmith voted yes

Motion passed 7-0

Meeting adjourned at 6:34pm

Submitted by:



Martha J. Rodenburg

Town Clerk

Approved by Town Council 9/26/2024