

Zebulon Board of Commissioners
Work Session
Minutes
May 9, 2024

Present: Mayor Glenn York, Jessica Harrison, Quentin Miles, Beverly Clark, Shannon Baxter, Amber Davis, Joe Moore-Town Manager, Lisa Markland-Town Clerk, Chris Ray-Public Works, Bobby Fitts-Finance, Jacqui Boykin-Police, Michael Clark-Planning, Sheila Long-Parks and Recreation, Kaleb Harmon-Communications, Sam Slater-Attorney

Mayor York called the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Clark made a motion, second by Commissioner Harrison to approve the agenda. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

FY '25 BUDGET

A. Recommended Budget

Joe Moore spoke about the budget statutory requirements, budget schedule and process and the budget message. The goals of the 2030 Strategic Plan were Vibrant Downtown, Growing Smart, and Small-Town Life and there was information given about the budget features for each of those goals. The positions in the FY '25 proposed budget included: two Watch Commanders, a Detective, three Firefighters, a Fire Administrative Assistant, Public Works Project Manager, Stormwater Manager, Transportation Planner II, Parks and Recreation Program Coordinator, Parks Maintenance Technician, Facility Maintenance Technician, Budget Analyst and Administrative Assistant to the Governing Board. There was information given about the issues the Town faced with recruitment, retention and compression issues.

An example of the Planning Department's labor shed was shown and how the Town was losing employees to the west due to more competitive salaries and more opportunities to develop skill sets.

The changes in revenue from the FY '24 proposed budget to the FY '25 proposed budget were shown.

Joe Moore explained any year there was an appraisal, state statute required the Town to report the revenue neutral tax rate to the citizens. Information was given about how that rate was calculated and the property value growing with the population growth. The tax rates from 2009 to 2016 were shown. Mr. Moore explained how the original tax rate was not sufficient, and revenue was lost in prior years. During that time, streets started to dilapidate, maintenance costs on fleet increased, the buildings needed more repair, sidewalks were not finished, value was decreasing downtown, and salaries did not increase. It was explained how a moderate increase of three cents per year could have helped to keep up with inflation. Mr. Moore recommended keeping the tax rate consistent at 57.5 cents.

Commissioner Baxter asked how a one cent increase amounted to. Bobby Fitts stated it would be approximately \$250,000.

Information about the changes in expenditures was reported. The total expenditures were \$28.5M with operating costs being \$19.5M and capital accounting for \$13.0M. Mr. Moore spoke about the requested positions, which ones were in, which were not and the rationale used to make that decision.

The topics for the May 15 budget work session were detailed. Joe Moore recommended focusing on the budget message and page 61 of the CIP.

Commissioner Baxter asked about the 3 to 5 year waiting period for new trucks and if that would be addressed before the new fire station was built. Chris Perry explained the CIP did take into account the extended delivery times for fire trucks. A truck was scheduled for replacement in 2027 and would take about two years to order the truck.

B. Transportation Impact Fee

Michael Clark stated the transportation impact fees were causing new commercial development to become very expensive.

Jeremy Potter, from Remy Kemp and Associates, was part of the team hired by the Town to perform an analysis of the Town's transportation needs and how the transportation impact fee could be changed to not be overly cost prohibitive for commercial use. The purpose of the Traffic Impact Fee update was explained. The deficiencies in the roadway network were detailed. Mr. Potter gave a traffic impact fee example. The goal was to try to balance residential and commercial so all plans worked together. There was discussion about the NCDOT and Comprehensive Transportation Plan numbers that were used to look at the projections and to ensure everything was consistent.

Joe Moore stated the Traffic Impact Fee was not intended to be the sole revenue source, other tools were the bond referendum and property tax rate. The Board was encouraged to look at page 46 in the fee schedule.

C. Branding

Joe Moore stated branding and wayfinding funds from FY '24 were not being rolled over to FY '25 unless the Board wanted to continue branding.

Commissioner Harrison asked for an update on the last branding consultants. Joe Moore stated the last presentation was at a mini retreat in Spring of 2023. There was no interest from the Board in moving forward on what was presented. Staff needed direction from the Board on whether they wanted to retain the current consultant, modify the product or to do something different.

Kaleb Hannon gave an overview, elements, and impacts of a brand. The reasons to rebrand were given. It was stated a successful rebrand required input and insight from the community including residents, business owners, community leaders, Town staff and elected officials. The Board was shown pictures of two different McDonald's restaurants and asked for their opinions of the pictures. The rebrand is how you can keep the old but repurposing it to fit your current needs.

Details of the Town of Zebulon brand were detailed including the brand name, logo, slogan, color scheme and typography.

Commissioner Harrison stated the Town had a lot of different demographics, cultures, and generations and did not want to let go of the history of where Zebulon came from.

Commissioner Baxter thought the Town seal was generic and needed to be updated. There was discussion about the typeface and colors.

Commissioner Miles suggested bringing in someone different to design the brand.

Commissioner Harrison stated Zebulon had a strong identity and it was not necessary to do a complete overhaul. The Town needed a stronger identity that speaks to then, now and the future. Kaleb agreed with not starting over and just updating what the Town had.

The Board was asked what they liked about the current seal. Some things mentioned were the outside rim, the circle, black, gold date. Commissioner Harrison appreciated that the seal attempted to tell the story of Zebulon.

The next steps included management examining and discussing today's feedback, reaching out to organizations to lead the rebrand and create a roadmap for the rebrand.

Mayor York stated there would be a 10-minute break.

The meeting reconvened at 7:13pm.

D. Municipal Campus Space Study

Joe Moore explained the space at Town Hall and the Police Department was not functioning well for citizens or as office space.

Michael Clark explained Town Hall was built as a school and had been retrofitted to meet the needs of staff and operations as a Town Hall. Staff was growing and space was becoming more limited. CPL was hired to review and perform a case study for Town Hall and the Police Department.

Josh Wheeler, with CPL, spoke about the Town's growth. The timeline and plan review were shown.

Commissioner Baxter stated she did not like building onto the existing building. Michael Clark explained there was not a definite space or door that showed the main entrance into the building. The modification would be on the side and would not obstruct or block any character defining features of the building.

Mr. Wheeler stated the upstairs renovations would be minor and most would remain the same. The site plan was shown and it was explained there would need to be an additional building in approximately five years to accommodate for the growth. Details of the Police Department renovations were given.

Commissioner Baxter stated she thought there was a lot of shuffling, and the Police Department just had their kitchen renovated. Mr. Wheeler explained Phase I and Phase II were not concurrent. Phase I did not have to be done. CPL was trying to stay within the existing footprint to keep the costs down.

Commissioner Miles asked how long the renovations would take. Mr. Wheeler explained it would be three to six years.

Commissioner Baxter stated the Economic Development team should not be moved downtown, the existing Fire Station could be retrofit and the EMS building could be utilized.

Commissioners Harrison thought this was jumping the gun with the money that had been invested in facilities over the last few years.

Michael Clark stated each of the consultants met with each of the departments. The Economic Development Department suggested moving into the former EMS building being that it was a Town owned facility. The Department was currently located within the Administration suite but would need to be moved once the Assistant Town Manager was hired. Staff needs were quickly exceeding the capacity of the building and operations could not be stopped.

Commissioner Miles asked if the storage area across from Town Hall could be office space. Michael Clark explained that was more complicated because the fire safes could not be moved together because of their weight. For the short term cubicles could be added to the space for Economic Development and Engineering.

Joe Moore stated the only funding in the FY '25 budget was for the short term to move storage and retrofit the back section.

E. 2024 Street and Sidewalk Bond Referendum: LGC Application and Budget Amendment

Joe Moore reviewed the recommendation for a \$20M transportation. The projects that needed funding first were the N. Arendell access and operational and sidewalk connection and the Jones connector and Proctor/Pearces roundabout and sidewalk connection. The options for the Board were to move forward with adoptions of a Resolution and Ordinance or to delay the projects. If delayed the N. Arendell project would not begin any sooner than summer '26 and the Jones connector would not be any sooner than summer '27.

Commissioner Baxter stated there was a \$20M without \$20M in projects and asked if projects should be added. The overages could be addressed during the construction phase. It was suggested that taxes could be raised if there were deficiencies. Another question asked by Commissioner Baxter was if the median for the N. Arendell widening project would affect a fire truck responding to a call. Chris Perry explained it was a 4-inch median that could be traversed by a fire apparatus or other public safety vehicle.

Commissioner Miles asked about the \$7M overage. Joe Moore stated the Town's known cost for the N. Arendell project was \$4M with a verbal commitment from CAMPO for a 50/50 match. There was no guarantee, and it could go up to \$8.5M. The amount allowed flexibly since there was not certainty about what CAMPO would support. Also, the construction market has increased significantly, and staff was covering for anything that could come up during the bid time.

There was discussion about the stormwater issues on Gannon. Joe Moore explained the stormwater component was project number three costing \$2M. If there was overage on the projects, bond funds could be used to cover street and sidewalk projects.

Commissioner Harrison stated she was pleased with the explanation of the bond amount. The issues were not going away and needed to be addressed.

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Commissioner Baxter asked about a potential park bond for FY '28. Joe Moore explained there was a healthy Parks and Recreation impact fee balance which could be used to purchase land. Funds would be needed to activate those spaces. The land purchase and design process would take time that is why it was recommended for FY '28.

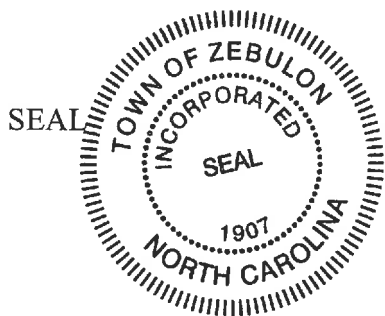
Commissioner Miles asked about the educational portion of the bond. Bobby Fitts explained that covered hiring a consultant to educate and inform the public on the proposed projects. Commissioner Baxter stated she would like to see the invoices for the education campaign as they moved through the process.

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Miles to approve Resolution 2024-22. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Miles made a motion, second by Commissioner Baxter to approve Ordinance 2024-48. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Miles made a motion, second by Commissioner Davis to adjourn. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Adopted this the 5th day of August 2024.




Glenn L. York—Mayor


Lisa M. Markland, CMC—Town Clerk