

Town of Farmington  
Public Hearing Final Budget  
November 15, 2021  
Telephone Dial in Available  
Telephone: 1-912-712-4359 / PIN: 978 843 985#

**ROLL CALL:**

Mayor Brian Oliver, Councilmembers: Lavon Walser, Diana Oliver, Shelly Lobdell and Blanche Rhea

**GUESTS:** Todd Lobdell

**FINAL BUDGET HEARING:**

Mayor Oliver opened the Final Budget Hearing at 6:00 pm. The final budget was distributed to all council members and was available for public viewing prior to the meeting. Mayor Oliver asked if the council or the public had any questions about the proposed final budget. Shelly Lobdell said she would like to start gathering information for a replacement schedule for tools and equipment. Most of the tools that were in the shop were privately owned over the years by former mayors or employees, so there are limited items to work with. Mayor Oliver said an inventory of all the supplies and tools within the shop has been completed, as well as a list of all the tools that have been purchased within the last 5 years. Council was in support of the proposed Operating Budget for 2022. Diane Oliver **MOVED** to approve Ordinance 254-21 adopting the 2022 Operating Budget. Lavon Walser **seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

Resolution 406-21 was presented which increases the current property tax levy collected by the maximum 1% annually and would be available for collection in 2022. This would result in an additional \$162.78 in property tax collection over last year. Lavon Walser **MOVED** to approve Resolution 406-21 1% property tax levy increase for collection in 2022. Blanche Rhea **seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

At this moment both levies are passing. The current expense levy is very close and the town won't know the final result until the levy is certified November 20<sup>th</sup>. Council was in support of the mayor signing and sending the levy certification to the county.

The Public Hearing for the 2022 Operating Budget was closed at 6:08 pm.

**OPEN REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING:**

Farmington's November 15th, 2021 Regular Town Council Meeting was called to order at 6:09 pm. This was an onsite meeting with a phone in option.

**APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA:**

- Approval of the October 18, 2021 Public Hearing & Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes
- Approval of the October 19th through November 15, 2021 check register.

- Approval of the October 2021 Treasurer's Report

Diana Oliver **MOVED** to approve the consent agenda for November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 council meeting. Lavon Walser **seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Discussion about the tree removal in front of town hall was conducted. Bill's Tree Service has provided a verbal bid for the removal of one tree. Blanche Rhea suggested to call Jeske Tree Removal and see if they could meet or beat Bill's price. It appears that two trees in front of town hall are now dead so probably both of them will need to come down for safety.

Blanche asked about the property on Lincoln Street with the building permit being red tagged. Several people have noticed work taking place there again. Mayor Oliver talked with Dwayne and he had some workers doing some garbage removal. He won't have anything else done there until the permit is paid for. Blanche also wondered about the restaurant status. Several things need to be resolved before any occupancy is granted there. She also wonders if people are aware that it is being listed online as a residential sale when it doesn't currently meet the criteria to be a residence.

Mayor Oliver provided an update on the ticket book which is very close to going to the printers and made available for the code enforcer to start writing citations. Until this is completed, he reminds everyone if there are issues happening that are illegal, they need to call and report it to the county. Shelly Lobdell expressed she feels the council needs to remain focused on larger issues that the town will eventually need to tackle with the water and sewer systems. Ordinances can start to be enforced once the ticket book arrives but it is not the council's responsibility to make sure the ordinances are enforced. The clerk's office is the responsible party for collecting funds and shutting off services or stopping services that haven't been paid. Council should not be getting in the middle of town squabbles and once the ticket book is received, if a resident is in obvious violation of an ordinance, then they should have to deal with the code enforcer and the county to rectify the issue.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Mayor Oliver presented Ordinance 256-21 which amends the current operating budget for 2021. The street fund is running very close to exceeding the approved expenditures for the year. The month of December and bills received until Jan 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022 must be covered in this budget cycle. Therefore, the street funds expenditures need to be increased to make sure the budget is not exceeded. This fund was very tight this year due to the failing Current Expense levy in 2020 for collection in 2021. Lavon Walser **MOVED** to approve Ordinance 256-21, amending the 2021 Operating Budget. Shelly Lobdell **seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

Resolution 405-21 sets the salaries to be distributed in 2022. Nothing has changed on the salary schedule from 2021 to 2022. Shelly Lobell **MOVED** to approve Resolution 405-21 setting the salaries for 2022. Blanche Rhea **seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

Resolution 407-21 Last October the council moved to increase the water and sewer rates each by 6% to bring them more in line with surrounding area utility charges and begin to move the rate

up to a level that allows for some infrastructure improvements in the coming years. It was decided at that time to evaluate an annual adjustment to make sure revenues were in line with expenditures on the aging system. Currently costs for the water and sewer system supplies are increasing at an alarming rate. Council has elected to seek another 6% increase for the water and sewer system charges and begin with the new billing rate on the January 1, 2022 utility billing. Blanche Rhea **MOVED** to approve Resolution 407-21, increasing water and sewer rates each by 6%. Lavon Walser **seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

John and Noreen Ewing purchased an alley vacation from the Town of Farmington around April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The recording of this sale was not finalized so the town must now reaffirm the sale and register the sale with the county so that their property is properly portrayed in their legal description for their future home sale. Ordinance 255-21 reaffirms this transaction and makes the process official. There are no changes to the condition of the sale just formalizing with the county records department. Cody will audit all other alley vacations that have taken place and make sure they were formalized with the county, at first glance it appears all others were handled appropriately. Blanche suggested sending a formal letter if any other properties need the same attention. The town will send a final bill to the Ewing's for the registration cost if there are any. Diana Oliver **MOVED** to approve Ordinance 255-21, reaffirming vacation and sale of an alley to John and Noreen Ewing. Blanche Rhea **seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

#### **CLERK/TREASURER COMMENTS:**

Cody said the January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020 audit is complete. Everything went smooth and there were no material deficiencies during this audit period. The State Auditor's Office would like to see the town adopt official policy on the subjects listed in the exit document. Cody will be working with other local agencies and the Resources Center at the State Auditor's Office to bring these current. One subject that came up at the audit which is troubling and a waste of resources is an undisclosed town citizen reported the mayor as getting a commission for town supplies that are purchased through his employer. Cody explained, the mayor has been on record saying he gets paid the same salary regardless of what he sells through his employer and receives no commission from the sale of these supplies. A citizen has the right to make a call to his employer and discover these details for themselves or they could come to town hall and request such documentation which would greatly reduce the amount of time spent invalidating such a claim.

#### **MAYOR COMMENTS:**

Mayor Oliver stated again that he is a salaried employee and receives no commission from the sale of supplies to the town. Moscow Pullman Building Supply is frequently used to buy supplies because they have the lowest price in the area and are the closest retailer to purchase many of the supplies the town needs.

Keltic Engineering will start to look over some granting opportunities in the near future for the water and sewer systems. Both systems are aging and the town will need to rely heavily on some granting opportunities to get the systems to a more modern state. No one wants to raise utility rates, but every engineer the town has talked with has suggested starting to move the rates up, otherwise the town will not even be eligible for grants. Repairs and maintenance on the system

will become more expensive over time so the town really needs to take the opportunity to start making phasic updates. This will help in keeping the rates manageable and allow the town to provide a good service at a respectable fee. Council has expressed their goal is keep rates as economical as possible, while being able to cover the bills and have some funding available for matching grants in the future. The council would like a letter drafted explaining the rate increase so utility users of town know the reason for collecting the fee and the need for the increase.

The mayor will be working to clear the beaver dam at the southwest side of town. Water is beginning to dam up and it is evident the beaver have been busy doing their work down there. The cost for the equipment will be about \$500 for 48 hours. Council was in support of clearing the debris so the creek doesn't become a flooding hazard.

Blanche Rhea **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. Diana Oliver **seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously**. The regular town council meeting was closed at 7:24 pm.

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Mayor Brian Oliver

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cody Lord Clerk-Treasurer

Town of Farmington – Public Hearing & Regular Town Council Meeting  
Monday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 - Farmington Community Center  
6:00 PM – 7:24 PM