

**Narrows Town Council Meeting
Budget Meeting #3
April 27, 2022**

Mayor Tom Spangler called the meeting to order. Council Members present were Clyde Turner, Sara Bowles, George Conley, John Mills, and Joe Goorskey.

Staff members present were Susan Kidd, Benji Ratcliffe, and Debbie Thomas.

Councilman Mills gave the invocation.

Council and audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Spangler said the first item on the agenda is the lot-line revision concerning the First United Methodist Church and Cindy Light.

Susan Kidd said the church and Cindy Light have signed the documents. All they need is for council to approve it. John Davis has checked and the lots conform to size.

Mike Bedsaul said this is the first time he has seen the documents. Council's job is to make sure it is in conformity with the current subdivision ordinance. Sometimes a lot-line revision can create a setback issue but this typically doesn't happen. The subdivision ordinance states that council must approve the lot-line revision, not the planning commission. There are no nonconforming issues.

**Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the lot-line revision for Cindy Light.
Councilman Conley seconded the motion.**

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Mayor Spangler said they will now go into executive session.

Councilman Mills made a motion to go into executive session to discuss real property (Sec. 2.2-3711.A.3). Councilman Goorskey seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Councilman Goorskey made a motion to return to open session. Councilman Conley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Certification

WHEREAS, the Town of Narrows, has convened an executive meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative-recorded vote and in accordance with the provision of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act: and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification of the Town Council that such executive meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE Town of Narrows hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia Law were discussed in the executive meeting to which this certification resolution applies: and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the executive meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Town Council.

ATTEST: _____

Councilman Goorskey made a motion to accept the certification. Councilman Mills seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Susan Kidd said she spoke with Donna Altizer, the Giles County General Registrar, and they are looking for a new polling place in Narrows because the VFW building is for sale. They would like for the Narrows Town Hall to be used for the new polling place if council was in agreement. They are looking at a few places in town but there are not very many that have a lot of parking and handicap access.

(Council all agreed to let the Narrows Town Hall be used for Narrows' new polling place)

Mayor Spangler said they will now discuss the FY23 budget. The line item for personal property is showing an increase of around \$30,000. Where is that increase coming from?

Susan Kidd said from the increase in value of used vehicles.

Councilman Conley said in Draft 2 and Draft 3 under 'recommendation' the deficit has a difference of around \$4,000.

Susan Kidd said the actual insurance rates for liability insurance were received so that caused the amount to change.

Councilman Conley asked if the new transient lodging tax ordinance goes into effect would that include the campground across the river?

Susan Kidd said it will if campers are there less than 30 days.

Mayor Spangler said the line item for 'part-time police' went up around \$18,500.

Susan Kidd said when Tommy Gautier was hired there was an increase to that line item in the middle of the budget year. This is for a whole year.

Councilman Goorskey said as it stands right now they are looking at an \$84,959 deficit, which is contingent on the sale of the bank building. If it is not sold, the deficit will increase by another \$60,000.

Susan Kidd said she would suggest they show the bank building locally and list it with a commercial realtor.

Mayor Spangler said the expenses for the Splash Pad at \$25,000 seems a little high.

Susan Kidd said they have to purchase chemicals and things like that this year when in the past it was given to them. They don't know how much these things will cost. They hope to do a lot more rentals in the evening and that should bring in more revenue.

Mayor Spangler said under 'Building Code Official' they don't have one but there are a lot of expenses associated with that position.

Susan Kidd said when Buddy Kast was working for the town 50% of his pay came from streets, 25% of his pay came from building code official, and 25% of his pay came from water/sewer admin. This was a payroll nightmare so now 50% of his pay comes from streets and 50% comes from water/sewer admin.

Councilman Conley asked if the fire department was still seeking funding for the PAR?

Susan Kidd said it is on hold.

Mayor Spangler said they are now looking at a .02¢ real estate tax increase to lower the deficit.

Susan Kidd said that is just a suggestion. Last year the deficit in the general fund was around \$71,000 and it has not been transferred and there is no plan to transfer the funds.

Councilman Mills said increases in small increments are better than large increments.

Mayor Spangler said if they can get the outfitter building finished and people can see progress and improvements in the town there will not be as much backlash if taxes are raised.

Councilman Mills said at the last PSA meeting they had a discussion about trying to retain people and trying to hire people. There are people that run sewer plants and other plants that are very skilled people. That is a vocation this town requires. It's painful to everyone but they would be remiss if they do not take care of their staff.

Susan Kidd asked if council would be in agreement to have a sale of surplus vehicles? Town employees would be given the first bid to purchase and all vehicles being sold have been taken to Newberry Ford and they have said what they would give the town for them. That would be the minimum bid.

(Council was in agreement to give first bid to town employees to purchase the surplus vehicles and the minimum bid would be the amount Newberry Ford said they would give the town for the vehicles)

Susan Kidd said the amount to outfit the ambulance is around \$31,000, which can be paid out of ARPA funds.

Councilman Mills said all of the items on the list will be needed to outfit the ambulance so he is in agreement to purchase the items.

Tom Garrett said he would suggest they wait and approve the funds for outfitting the ambulance at the next council meeting so it doesn't look like money was approved at a budget work session. It makes no real difference but has a different appearance.

(Council agreed to wait until the next council meeting to approve the money to outfit the ambulance)

Susan Kidd said they had been talking about someone doing community and economic development and Lindsey Caudill does a great job at community development. She would like to propose that Lindsey Caudill continue to work at the rec department with scheduling, ordering supplies, etc. They could also place her in the position of part-time community/economic development employee and let Landon Patteson hire someone to work 20 hours/week and pay them out of the part-time line item. They would line fields, drag fields, referee games, etc. Lindsey Caudill could take people around and show them what buildings are available in town.

Councilman Mills said he believes that would be an excellent way to use the town's staff.

Councilman Goorskey said he is all for maximizing the town's employees greatest traits. He doesn't want to say anything negative about Lindsey Caudill at all because her strengths in those areas are fantastic and she does a great job as an assistant to Landon Patteson. There are some things on the recreation side of the job that she is not as strong in because she doesn't have a lot of background in sports and may not be as comfortable running clocks and being present during games. She does those things but if an argument arises she may not feel comfortable. He feels strongly that Lindsey Caudill is an asset to this town and they need to keep her engaged in things she is interested in and areas where she can grow and shine. He has seen what she has done with creating a huge list of vendors and when she has events people are knocking down her door and she did this in a short amount of time. This goes hand in hand with business interest, selling real estate, or putting together a list of town properties and showing how they can or cannot be used. They would also be retaining an employee because there would be room for advancement.

Susan Kidd said they can do it within the budget council has before them. Landon Patteson and Lindsey Caudill have both been informed of the potential changes.

Councilman Conley said the proposed salaries are still the same.

Susan Kidd said yes.

Mayor Spangler asked council if there was any discussion on the salary increases?

Councilman Mills said if they are willing to raise taxes to give employees a deserved salary increase then if they don't hire the 2 positions that need to be filled employees will need to work a little harder.

Police Chief Ratcliffe said he received a call from his representative with their vehicles and it's possible that Dodge is going to cancel all contracts on police vehicles. The new police vehicle for the town has been ordered but it may be cancelled. If this happens, would council like for him to wait and purchase this vehicle in the next budget? If so, this would mean purchasing 2 vehicles at that time.

Councilman Conley asked Police Chief Ratcliffe how his vehicles were?

Police Chief Ratcliffe said right now they are not in bad shape but they tried purchasing 2 vehicles every other year in the past and it was a big hit to the budget.

Councilman Mills said they either need vehicles or they don't and the cost of vehicles isn't going to be any cheaper.

Police Chief Ratcliffe said if they cancel the order on the Dodge he may have to look at purchasing a Chevrolet or a Ford. Right now, a Dodge would be the cheaper vehicle.

Mayor Spangler asked if council was in agreement with a .02¢ real estate increase, the 1% meals tax increase, and the general fund transfer?

Councilman Goorskey asked how Lindsey's Caudill pay would be listed in the budget?

Susan Kidd said half of her pay would come from parks and rec and half of her pay would come from community and economic development.

Mayor Spangler said if her new part-time position didn't work out is there a plan b?

Susan Kidd said it would be up in the air at that time.

Councilman Goorskey said this would be one of the discussions they have when they are talking about hiring a town manager. He would like to find a town manager that has a vision for helping employees grow. Landon Patteson and Lindsey Caudill are in unique positions where they can generate revenue. Landon Patteson is going to have to put some serious time into the ballfield project and getting more leads going.

Mayor Spangler said he hopes Landon Patteson and Lindsey Caudill both understand what their roles are in this transition because Landon will have more on him than he has in the past.

Susan Kidd said they will develop job descriptions.

Councilman Conley asked if there was a way to average the real estate tax increase to show how much per year per household?

Mayor Spangler said his would increase about \$45/year.

Councilman Conley said he believes the residents of Narrows realize there is going to be a tax increase and know it has to be.

Councilman Turner said his brother had a water break and he just found it yesterday. He has a water bill of over \$900 and next month's bill will be even higher.

Susan Kidd said they can do an adjustment but it can't be done until the leak is repaired. He had been notified that he had a leak.

Councilman Turner said he is just going by what his brother told him and he said he never received a notice on that.

Susan Kidd said he has to fix the leak and then an adjustment can be done to his water bill. He was notified about the leak and there was some personal contact with some employees.

Councilman Conley made a motion to schedule a public hearing for the FY23 budget at the June 13th council meeting. Councilman Mills seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Councilman Mills made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Clerk, Debbie Thomas

Mayor, Tom Spangler