

**TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY
BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 27, 2012**

The South Bethany Budget and Finance Committee met on Friday, January 27, 2012, at 3:00 p.m. at Town Hall. In attendance were Pat Voveris, Steve Farrow, John Fields, Melvin Cusick, Renee McDorman, and Don Chrobot. Keith Krenz, Kent Stephan, and Chief Joe Deloach had excused absences.

Minutes from the November 18, 2011, Budget and Finance Committee Meeting were approved.

Don and Melvin then spoke on the need to increase our Maintenance Department to 2 full-time people from our current 1 ½ people, one full-time and one part-time person for 6 months of the year.

Don expressed concern that all necessary work could no longer be handled with the current level of manpower. Contracting out work would be at least a \$35 hourly rate while using in house personnel would be much less and more manageable for him not having to spend time searching for sources and then having to supervise the work.

Every year new projects are implemented through efforts of enthusiastic Council and committee people. Last year Mobi-Mats were introduced. This year the median was developed and trash can planters were established. It is important the Town have good infrastructure to support new initiatives. We need to be proactive rather than reactive.

Melvin expressed that Don can no longer handle all the work without more help. Much has been put in place since Don joined South Bethany six years ago and his part-time person was put in place three years ago. The department, as is, is over extended.

John questioned the need of adding so much expense, primarily for benefits, to the budget. He suggested another part-time person to cover work.

Steve was in support of more help for the department if needed and also acknowledged the idea to look at an additional part-time person.

Pat spoke to the fact that after seven years of being Town Manager and six years of being Maintenance Supervisor, Melvin and Don were just now requesting two full-time people in Maintenance. She additionally addressed the intrinsic benefit of a full-time person having a vested, dedicated interest in South Bethany.

For public comment, resident Sue Callaway spoke to four items that she considered to be an investment in the future of our town: Expanding the Maintenance Department - it is important we continue moving forward and not regress. Her personal business experience with employees makes her of the opinion that commitment and loyalty come with a full-time employee, along with a higher expectation of work standard. Sue further spoke to the efficiency within

Maintenance if Don needed to spend less time contracting out for needed services and instead could rely on in house personnel that understood his system and the job duties and were reliable and accountable.

Sue further spoke to considerations of Budget and Finance to support the efforts of the Community Enhancement Committee's proposed endeavor on the Ocean Drive signs and improvements to the one area in South Bethany that everyone uses at one time or another; the Water Quality Committee's proposed endeavor on an aerator as improved water quality in our network of canals impacts all property values in South Bethany not just the homes adjacent to the canals; and an increase in compensation for the staff infrastructure that makes South Bethany operate smoothly and who are clearly invested in improving South Bethany.

George Junkin, resident, spoke to wanting to look at the cost associated with having a second full-time person in Maintenance vs. having 2 part-time employees. It is clear to George that Maintenance has a lot of work to accomplish, and is supportive of giving the department more help.

Additionally, George reiterated the Town Survey results supporting Canal Maintenance and piloting a diffuser.

A review of the proposed 3% New Construction Fee resulted in John's objection over the increase of any fee as long as South Bethany has a Budget Surplus. Pat explained this surplus would sustain the depreciation funding for 2013 and 2014 budgets. Then the surplus would be depleted.

Steve spoke to this fee generating much needed revenue and affecting those wanting to build a new home in South Bethany. Only current residents tearing down and rebuilding their home would be affected by this fee.

Pat spoke to the neighboring towns of Bethany, Rehoboth, Dewey, and Fenwick using the fee. Fenwick mirrors the size of South Bethany.

The 2013 Draft Budget was then reviewed. Discussion centered around Depreciation Projects. Maintenance Department expansion was discussed earlier in the meeting.

Particular areas were reviewed first in Revenue then in Expenses for each department. Largest increases, in particular, were reviewed.

The Budget and Finance Committee went into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

The next meeting is planned for 2/11/12, Saturday, at 10:00 a.m. At that time budget revisions will be reviewed and final recommendations solidified. The draft budget will then be compiled for Council review.