

TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES MARCH 26, 2015
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MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Voveris called the March 26, 2015, Town Council Budget Workshop Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Council Members Sue Callaway, Tony Caputo, Jim Gross, George Junkin, Al Rae, Tim Saxton, and Mayor Pat Voveris; Town Manager Melvin Cusick; Chief Troy Crowson; and Finance Director Renee McDorman

APPROVAL AND VOTE OF THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilman Gross, seconded by Councilman Junkin, to approve the agenda. Councilman Saxton asked to remove Agenda Item 11, Discussion and possible vote on FY 2015 Budget Amendments, and to move Item 10, FY 2016 Draft Budget Review to Item 7. Council agreed. The motion was unanimously carried.

Administrative Assistant's Note: These minutes reflect the order in which agenda items were discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments from the public.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- **Town Council Workshop Meeting Minutes, December 18, 2014** – A motion was made by Councilman Junkin, seconded by Councilman Caputo, to accept the December 18, 2014, Town Council Workshop Meeting Minutes as amended as follows (where applicable, additions are **highlighted** and deletions **marked through**):

Page 8, Paragraph One, Last Sentence: Change **have** to **has**.

Because the Town does not have email addresses for all property owners, Council was leaning towards ruling out **an online survey service** (Survey Monkey).

The motion was unanimously carried.

- **Town Council Workshop Meeting Minutes, January 26, 2015** – A motion was made by Councilman Junkin, seconded by Councilman Gross, to accept the January 26, 2015, Town Council Workshop Meeting Minutes. The motion was unanimously carried.
- **Town Council Executive Session Meeting Minutes, January 26, 2015** – A motion was made by Councilman Junkin, seconded by Councilman Gross, to accept the January 26, 2015, Town Council Executive Session Meeting Minutes. The motion was unanimously carried.
- **Town Council Public Hearing Minutes, January 29, 2015** – A motion was made by Councilman Junkin, seconded by Councilman Gross, to accept the January 29, 2015, Town Council Public Hearing Minutes. The motion was unanimously carried.
- **Town Council Workshop Meeting Minutes, January 29, 2015** – A motion was made by Councilman Junkin, seconded by Councilman Gross, to accept the January 29, 2015, Town

Council Workshop Meeting Minutes as amended as follows: Page 2, Second Paragraph:
After **Do not** delete the word **to**.

The motion was unanimously carried.

- **Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes, February 13, 2015** – A motion was made by Councilman Junkin, seconded by Councilman Gross, to accept the February 13, 2015, Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was unanimously carried.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE TO SCHEDULE THE FIRST READING OF A DRAFT ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 145 AS FOLLOWS: 1) REQUIRE ¾" SPACING BETWEEN LATTICE BOARDS IN CONSTRUCTION, 2) CLARIFY THE DEFINITION FOR SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT AND SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE, AND 3) ADD REQUIREMENTS TO THE CODE REGULATING FIRE PITS

Council agreed to a draft ordinance to clarify the following definitions in § 145-3 Definitions and word use: 1) FLOOR-TO-AREA RATIO (FAR), 2) SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE, and 3) SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT.

After discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Gross, seconded by Councilman Junkin, to move forward with the first reading of the ordinance to clarify the definition of FLOOR-TO-AREA RATIO (FAR) at the April 10, 2015, Town Council Regular Meeting. The motion was unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Gross, seconded by Councilman Junkin, to move forward with the first reading of the ordinance to clarify the definition of SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE at the April 10, 2015, Town Council Regular Meeting. The motion was unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Gross, seconded by Councilman Junkin, to move forward with the first reading of the ordinance to clarify the definition of SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT at the April 10, 2015, Town Council Regular Meeting. The motion was unanimously carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Gross, seconded by Councilman Junkin, to table and refer back to the Charter and Code Committee the language in the draft ordinance regarding fire pits. The motion was unanimously carried.

Mayor Voveris tabled James Saftich's request to read his letter/communication dated March 25, 2015, and said it would be placed on file.

Councilman Gross read the following email and requested that the contents of the email be added to the meeting minutes:

From: JamesG144@aol.com [<mailto:JamesG144@aol.com>]

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 8:20 AM

To: jamesafich@yahoo.com

Cc: patvoveris@gmail.com; saxtontd@hotmail.com; al.rae@verizon.net; gjunk2@aol.com; amcllc06@hotmail.com; sue.callaway@gmail.com; jfields@mchsi.com; rjestone@verizon.net;

Joseph Hinks; Melvin Cusick; Pam Smith

Subject: SBPOA Letter from the President 3/19/15

James

Your Letter from the President of March 19, 2015 to SBPOA property owners greatly disappoints and grievously hurts me.

You state in the third paragraph:

"In her report you will see that Councilman Jim Gross has announced that he is proposing a complete ban on any wood fires in fire pits (apparently only coal and gas will be allowed). He cannot nor has he cited any specific reason for this decision to just absolutely ban the use of fire pits across the board. However he expressed his concern that a fire might occur."

This paragraph contains two statements that are not true. 1. I did not propose a complete ban on wood fires in fire pits (the C&CC did) and 2. I can cite reasons why the Charter and Code committee drafted the recommendation.

My March 13 report to the Council, about the Charter and Code Committee in regard to fire pits was:

"3. Development of new requirements to address portable and permanent Fire pits.

Action: The C&CC recommends that permanent and portable wood burning fire pits and other wood burning devices be prohibited outside of buildings in South Bethany."

I may not have given reasons that satisfied your reporter, however, reasons were given and below is provided additional background information. This background was not given during the meeting because the Council had the information and participated in its development. That was neither the time nor place to go into an extensive background.

Copies of over 40 emails have been received by me, all prompted by your erroneous report. Some owners provide thoughtful comments which will be useful in further addressing the fire pit issues. However, many others contained disparaging personal remarks addressed to me.

I have reviewed the minutes of Town Council meetings held within the past year and below summarize my review of the fire pit issues. There were at least four meetings during which fire pit regulations were discussed. For a further understanding I suggest you review these minutes as well. The minutes are available on the Town web site.

4/11/14 Regular Meeting

Then Mayor Jankowski requested that the subject of a possible ordinance on fire pits be put on the agenda for the next workshop meeting.

4/24/14 Workshop Meeting

On April 22 Councilwoman Voveris circulated a memoranda along with six informative documents to the Council as background for the discussion. In the summary paragraph of her memoranda she wrote *"Several owners have expressed concerns to me about fire pits, whether portable or permanent. Given the close proximity & material composition of our houses, the amount of grass or other vegetation, the wind factor, and that renters may be more into "party" than "prudent" there is much to consider."*

The following is another paragraph from the Minutes:

"Mayor Jankowski asked Council if this was something Council wanted to put on the list of ordinances that the Charter and Code Committee is reviewing. Councilman Gross believes Council should make some recommendations rather than just turning it over to the Charter and Code Committee. When considering the vegetation, the closeness of the houses, the wood structures, and the wind, Councilwoman Voveris stated that it does not seem like there is enough room on most of the properties in South Bethany to have a fire pit safely burning. Councilman Rae stated that he is concerned with the pine needles in South Bethany, adding that pine needles caused the fire on Anchorage Drive a couple of years ago."

10/3/14 Workshop Meeting

I reported that the Charter and Code Committee had discussed the drafting of an ordinance to address the fire pit issue as requested by the Council. The Committee found this difficult and requested further direction from the Council prior to proceeding. The Council provided four items

of direction. The last of which was *"Include separate requirements for permanent fire pits and portable fire pits. Keep permanent fire pits excluded from the setbacks. (It was noted that South Bethany already has a rule prohibiting structures in the setback and this would apply to permanent fire pits.)"*

10/10/14 Regular Meeting

Reporting on the activities of the Code and Charter Committee I noted that the Committee had requested further direction from the Council for preparation of a draft ordinance on fire pits and that this had been provided during the 10/3/14 Workshop Meeting.

In summary

Contrary to the SBPOA charge, I did not propose the draft recommendation to ban wood burning permanent and portable fire pits nor was I unable to give reasons for the draft recommendation from the Charter and Code Committee.

Simply put, the reasons for development of a draft ordinance include:

1. Reduce the probability of disastrous fires in South Bethany,
2. Address home owners expressed concerns about current code requirement related to fire pits,
3. The Town Council after public deliberation requested the Charter and Code committee to draft a proposed ordinance to address permanent and portable fire pits,
4. The Town Council directed the Committee to draft an ordinance including provisions to prohibit permanent fire pits in setback areas.

I have owned property in South Bethany since 1964 and been a member of and supported the SBPOA for as long as I can remember, perhaps since its beginning. *The SBPOA March 19, 2015 irresponsible report has caused me much anguish and harm. Please publish my response and send it to the membership.*

Jim Gross

FY 2016 DRAFT BUDGET REVIEW

Council reviewed the FY 2016 Draft Budget. Council discussed the following:

- The subject of further review to address an increase in the cost for employee health care premiums that was just received from the State. Later in the discussion of the FY 2016 Draft Budget, Councilwoman Callaway commented on the possible creation of a reserve for healthcare that could cover instances such as these where unexpected increases surfaced and the amount of money was considerable. It was noted that the FY 2016 Draft Budget was already completed, reviewed, and agreed upon by Council and now Council was revisiting and adjusting items that all had been approved and given much consideration. Mayor Voveris reiterated that at their last discussion she was in favor of raising revenue in rental income. Living on Ocean Drive, she was keenly aware that several houses that had always rented did not rent last season because they were under new construction and this year they were again ready to rent. Mayor Voveris said the high dollar of rental on Ocean Drive could easily cover the recent increase in health care premium. The Finance Director had also just determined that rental licenses were up by 22 in number over the same period as last year.
- A listing of proposed budget changes for expense cuts prepared by the Treasurer and the Town Manager were presented.
- Councilman Junkin supported not cutting employee raises. Councilman Saxton said that the proposed cut was not in employee raises – the proposed cut was in the employees' COLA. Mayor Voveris suggested the item be addressed as compensation.

- Councilman Junkin suggested cutting the \$5,000 in Canal Water Quality which was put in for grant opportunity, and none was on the horizon.
- Councilman Junkin suggested cutting one movie night. Councilwoman Callaway disagreed with cutting a movie night as that was for the benefit of the entire community. Mayor Voveris said she would rather see the movie night cut than employee compensation.
- Councilman Rae said he did not want to increase revenue. Councilman Saxton said the Budget and Finance Committee did not want to increase revenue but instead recommends decreasing expenses. Councilwoman Callaway asked who was on the Budget & Finance Committee making this recommendation. Councilman Saxton said the Budget & Finance Committee included him, Councilman Caputo, Steve Farrow, Jay Headman, and Keith Krenz. Councilwoman Callaway questioned Keith Krenz still being on the committee. Mayor Voveris said she thought Keith Krenz had resigned. Councilman Saxton said he was not aware of any resignation.
- Councilwoman Callaway suggested eliminating "Temporary Service Personnel". She stated that volunteers could be used to stuff envelopes. The Town Manager said a temporary service could also be used for an employee who is out sick or having surgery.
- Councilwoman Callaway questioned the proposed reduction in Public Safety (PS) Training. Mayor Voveris said the Town just hired a Chief and tasked him with introducing more training in the Police Department. Mayor Voveris said she could not support cutting training.

Council agreed to the following:

1. Removing from the Canal Water Quality Committee FY 16 budget the Grant for Circulation Study in the amount of \$5,000 and removing from the Public Relations Committee FY 16 budget one movie night in the amount of \$1,500.
2. Add the following back into the FY 2016 Draft Budget: A) COLA - \$4,235, B) PS Training - \$1,000, C) St. Lights - \$720, and D) St. Maint - \$545.

A motion was made by Councilman Saxton, seconded by Councilman Junkin, to make the changes as stated in Items 1 and 2 above. The motion was unanimously carried.

After discussion and agreement in reducing these expenses, Councilman Saxton spoke to revisiting these cut items once the surplus number was in. Councilman Gross commented that it looks like Council will end up putting items that were cut back in later.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE ON A PROPERTY OWNER'S REQUEST TO USE THE COUNCIL MEETING ROOM FROM NOON TO 1 P.M. ON MAY 7 FOR THE NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

A motion was made by Councilwoman Callaway, seconded by Councilman Caputo, to allow a property owner to use the Council Meeting Room from noon to 1 p.m. on May 7 for the National Day of Prayer. The motion was unanimously carried.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE ON POLICY IN PLACE ON OWNER USE OF COUNCIL ROOM

Council discussed the policy in place regarding the use of the Town Hall Meeting Room. The current policy was agreed upon by Council at the February 18, 2009, Town Council Workshop Meeting. Council proposed that guidelines for the use of Town Hall facilities and an application for use of Town Hall facilities be drafted and discussed at the April 23, 2015, Town Council Workshop Meeting. Councilman Caputo and Councilwoman Callaway agreed to work with the Town Manager to come up with a draft policy.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE TO AWARD BID NO. 15-03 ANCHORAGE CANAL DRAINAGE AREA STORMWATER RETROFIT PROJECT

Councilman Junkin presented the Canal Water Quality Committee's recommendation on the award of Bid No. 15-03.

A motion was made by Councilman Junkin, seconded by Councilman Gross, to award Bid No. 15-03 Anchorage Canal Drainage Area Stormwater Retrofit Project to A-Del Construction Company, Inc. for the total amount of \$131,000.00. The motion was unanimously carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments from the public.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilman Gross, seconded by Councilman Saxton, to adjourn the March 26, 2015, Town Council Budget Workshop Meeting at 6:40 p.m.

PHS:Budget Workshop Minutes 3 26 15 Adopted 5 8 15