

TC Public hearing 6.3.24

Mayor Spencer, Commissioner Brelia, Commissioner Harrison, Commissioner Noon, Commissioner Robinson, Deputy Manager Fowler, Chief Trams, Public Works Supervisor Cunningham, COMS Weaver, Town Attorney Ryan

Public and residents: Cathy Spencer, Renee Swafford, Donna Clay, Jim Pratt, Allan Mowbray, Christ Mason, Terri Christopher, Kenny Burk, Tom Chandler, William Schaffner, Connie Connolly, Katie Cunningham, Timothy Dalton, Roxann Lopez, Vanice Myers, Jeff Jackson, Kevin Parks

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Spencer.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Spencer stated that tonight's meeting is to hold a public hearing for Ordinance 2024-O-3, adopting the July 2024-June 2025 budget, and Ordinance 2024-O-4, raising water and sewer rates.

Attorney Ryan gave an update as to past meeting dates where both ordinances were introduced, as well as where they were posted.

Mayor Spencer asked for a motion to open the public hearing on Ordinance 2024-O-3.

***Motion to open public hearing on Ordinance 2024-O-3 An ordinance of the Town of Greensboro adopting a general budget and enterprise budget for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, and establishing a tax rate for the fiscal year in the amount of \$0.70 per \$100 of assessed real property value; \$1.15 per \$100 on all commercial or business personal property; and \$1.40 per \$100 on public utilities; and to adopt the service charge on the second semiannual tax payment and an administrative fee adopted by Caroline County was made by Commissioner Brelia and seconded by Commissioner Noon. All in favor. A public hearing opened.***

The mayor asked for those wishing to speak to step to the podium and state their name.

Renee Swafford

- Requesting \$12000 for Juneteenth 2025 to strengthen the city's sense of community and history
- Greensboro is unique in that it has two sites along the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway Driving Tour. Site 36 (Dangerous Crossing at North Main Street and Cedar Lane) and site 37. (Christian Park/Red Bridges).
- Also requesting \$6000 to be re-allocated from "Whoville and Christmas lighting of the City" in 2025 for Kwanza which is celebrated December 26 to January 1.

Donna Clay –

- We have the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest tax rate in MD.
- Suggested paying off loans, travel and training figures need to be addressed as well as cutting salaries and personnel.
- Suggested rewriting job descriptions so 5 people are not needed in Town Hall. Admin/Code Enforcement currently not filled so Jaime should continue to do Code Enforcement

because she had training for it. PD is budgeted for 4 officers and an administrative person. They seem to be doing well with 2 so she suggests leaving it that way until the loans are paid off. Also suggested to evaluate the wage increases.

- FY25 budget is more than double 23 and 24 actual expenses.

Jim Pratt

- Not understanding the sewer budget. There was a deficit now there isn't.
- Position for apprentice at the WWTP, is that salary projected or coming out of Public Works.
- Community Outreach/Main Street Coordinator position started at \$40K and now \$59K to \$61K – is it still partially grant funded?

Alan Mowbray

- Does not agree with salaries being voted on in private.
- For a town with under 2000 people the PD budget should not be \$247K per officer, and there are outside entities that can provide that service.
- Should pay on loans and there is money in the budget if cuts are made.
- Talk of mayor recall.
- Why 66% increase in budget

Chris Mason

- Had his associate, Tim Dalton, serve lawsuits for \$30K each to each council person at 6:18 pm.
- Requesting council to sit with residents to fix budget.
- Also suggested mayor recall and spoke of the two council seats up next year.
- PD budget needs to be cut.
- Charter is messed up.
- Suggested to council to sit down together before Friday would be good – but if not prepare to go to federal court.

Terri Christopher –

- Need to be more transparent and the Town should be run as a business.
- Residents pay more than Denton and Ridgely for water/sewer.
- She felt as though we were making progress and now that had stopped.
- (from Renee Swafford) suggested to draft an ordinance that any council person who steps down is not allowed to hold an employment position for five years.

Tim Dalton

- Noticed that we don't celebrate for 4<sup>th</sup> of July and stuff and that we are a Christian based culture and society, so he suggested putting July 4<sup>th</sup> and Christmas into budget for holidays (along with kwanza and Juneteenth).

Roxanne Lopez –

- Inquired about the water quality report.
- Facebook page is in the name of the town, and she feels she has been censored and is looking into legal action. (referencing the Talk of the Town Facebook page).

Mayor Spencer asked for a motion to close the public hearing on Ordinance 2024-O-3.

***Motion made to close public hearing on Ordinance 2024-O-3 made by Commissioner Robinson and seconded by Commissioner Harrison. All in favor. Public hearing on Ordinance 2024-O-3 is closed.***

Motion to open pete/joe to open w/s rates

All in favor

Chris said not on website

Donna – what is sewer collection – and – why Goldsboro budget went down by 18K in 25 from what they spent in 24? Greensboro increased 235K from actual.

Chris – town charter – ethics committee – headed by town attorney – who are they? Are they registered with the state? – process? Subtitle 16-2 ethics committee.

Motion to close pete.bob

Motion for adjoru pete/joe.