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## **BUDGET MEETING APRIL 23, 2026**

The Town Council of the Town of Pineville, NC met in a Budget Workshop on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 6:00 pm. The meeting was held in Town Hall Council Chambers.

### Attendance:

Mayor: Amelia Stinson-Wesley

Mayor Pro Tem: Nick Gallo

Council Members: Danielle Moore, Josh Simelton, and Ed Samaha

Town Manager: Ryan Spitzer

Asst. Manager/Finance Director: Chris Tucker

Town Clerk: Lisa Snyder

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director, Chris Tucker, began by outlining the General Fund adjustments, which include one re-class up (one grade to another grade), COLA of 3.5% and Merit at 2.5%, no tax increase, and a balanced budget.

He noted that investment earnings dropped by \$150,000. There was growth in Tourism revenues. The ETJ will see an increase from the County. Capital projects included are IT projects, Police cars, Public Works mobility (truck), a Leaf Vac, Public Works resurfacing, Hwy 51 Crosswalk, Stormwater improvements, and Jack Hughes Park improvements. Also included are a Fitness Court Shade, BJCC gate, BJCC Study and a vehicle.

Council projects/priorities were listed and include sponsorship to Pineville Neighbors Place (\$120,000), Tourism Grants (\$49,000), Branding/ADA website (\$50,000), mobility initiatives (\$160,000), competitive salaries to market, and BJCC expansion project (\$150,000). Mr. Tucker shared a pie chart of the General Fund by Category and by Function.

He further highlighted the pressures: lagging the market, debt affordability, future park expansion, retirement contributions for FTEs, health insurance, and fuel costs.

Lingering decisions to be made include the Fire Safer Grant, Fire ETJ, Fire becoming a Town department (pilot), health insurance final, State funding of co-responder > re-fund LEOs next Fiscal Year, how capital gets funded (Davenport), strategies moving into the re-evaluation year, and electric rate increase of 4%. Council unanimously approved the 4% increase.

Mr. Tucker discussed major pressures, which include health insurance renewal. Our broker advised that we are seeing an increase of 49% in health insurance costs. There were no takers when they shopped to market. Town Staff recommends joining NCHIP. They cover 39 counties in North Carolina, including Cornelius, Troutman, and others. They are a Blue Cross Blue Shield provider and they are extremely stable. In the last 7 years they have had an average increase of 2.4%. However, to join them, they require \$200,000 to join. When comparing what we have now, and NCHIP, the comparison is apples to apples.

Staff looked at 3 ways to approach the change. (1) Work the edges by taking \$100,000 across 3 revenue sources and \$100,000 across 2 functions. (2) Attach salaries and benefits by hedging 401K by 1% (\$40,000), reducing COLA by 1% (\$73,000), hedging 1 position (\$77,000) and hedging separation allowance (\$10,000). (3) Attack Operations (Department Head input) reducing contingency (\$50,000), reducing Police/Fire (\$25,000), reducing General Government (\$75,000), reducing Public Works (\$10,000), reducing Parks & Rec (\$10,000) and reducing contributions to the Capital Reserve (\$10,000). (4) Reduce contingency (\$25,000) and reducing general government (\$50,000), and hedge personnel (\$125,000).

There was a general discussion about the costs of health insurance premiums. Council gave the Town Manager and Assistant Manager/Finance Director approval to look at other ways to fund the family portion of the benefits cost.

Mr. Tucker advised that all budgets are balanced. Mr. Spitzer will review the final budget at our upcoming Work Session and there will be a public hearing on May 12<sup>th</sup> to announce the budget for FY26-27.

Council member Simelton asked when the Fire Department signal will be installed and Mr. Spitzer replied that it will be this summer, potentially by July. Mayor Pro Tem Gallo began a general discussion about the cost of the new electric systems building. Mr. Spitzer shared that 6 to 8% of the cost is due to the architect's fees. Council was agreeable to looking for another architect.

Council Member Simelton moved to adjourn the meeting followed by a second made by Council Member Alford. All ayes. Adjournment was at 8:10 pm.

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Mayor Amelia Stinson-Wesley

ATTEST:

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Town Clerk Lisa Snyder