

TYRONE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING - BUDGET WORKSHOP

MINUTES

May 15, 2024 at 3:30 PM

Eric Dial, Mayor

Gloria Furr, Mayor Pro Tem, Post 4

Jessica Whelan, Post 1

Dia Hunter, Post 2

Billy Campbell, Post 3

Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

Dee Baker, Town Clerk

Dennis Davenport, Town Attorney

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. INVOCATION

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made to approve the agenda.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Hunter.

Voting Yea: Council Member Furr, Council Member Whelan.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA:

All matters listed under this item are considered to be routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will not be separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered separately.

VII. PRESENTATIONS

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

IX. OLD BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

1. FY25 Budget Overview - Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

Mr. Perkins thanked staff for their hard work, especially with the new software. Before Council was the proposed budget of \$11,924,305 which was a 32.12% decrease from last year. Balancing the budget proposal included the use of \$4,495,066.23 from surplus funds, which was a 51.88% decrease from fiscal year 24.

He added that over \$9 million was used to balance the current budget. Standard practice was to have 2-3 months of Reserves and Surplus and the Town had 6 months' worth. He stated that the Town's policy was to maintain 6 months of Reserves and anything over would be considered Surplus.

He stated that most of the Technical Services line for most departments had decreased, which was not due to cutting costs. He explained that there was a new accounting practice titled Subscription-Based IT Agreements (SBITA). It included payroll, email, financial software, and more, such as ADP, ClearGov, and Rackspace.

He stated that as discussed during the first workshop in March, \$5,500 was added to the SBITA line in the Administration budget, moving all employees, elected officials, and planning commissioners to Office 365 for email and office/productivity software, etc. The transition would begin in July. That move would be more efficient and employees could work from anywhere. It would also save the Town money as new computers are purchased; Office 365 would not need to be added.

Mr. Perkins shared that last year there were no increases to the medical and dental insurance plans, however, staff did anticipate an increase, and 15% was placed as a contingency. He added that the previous year was increased by 20%. If the increase was more than 15% the cost would not be a full year as open enrollment began in October and would go into effect later in the calendar year.

He informed everyone that \$7,140,00 was added to the Public Safety and Public Safety Administration budget to cover the officer's participation in the Peace Officer's Annuity and Benefit (POAB) Fund of Georgia, which was a State-administered supplement retirement fund for certified police officers. Eligible officers could gain up to \$900 monthly supplements which only cost officers \$35 per month and were transferable. He added that it would also assist with maintaining a competitive edge.

Mr. Perkins explained that \$1,500,000 continued to be carried forward for the Pendleton Dam project. The project would not begin until the Town heard from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and staff was hopeful regarding being awarded a grant for the amount from the Federal Government. The amount must remain in the budget until the completion of the project.

Mr. Perkins stated that \$4.5 million of Surplus was used to balance the General Fund budget and also included funding for several projects that were budgeted in Fiscal Year 24, but not completed, including projects funded with Assigned Funds (ARPA).

Mr. Perkins reminded everyone that the Town ended Fiscal Year 23 with 15.7 months of Reserve funding, which was approximately \$9.2 million according to the 2024 audit report. That left the Town with the required 6-month reserve of approximately \$2.5 million and a Surplus of approximately \$6.6 million.

Mr. Perkins spoke regarding revenue. He stated that the Town projected an overall increase in tax revenue of 7.25% from all sources over Fiscal Year 25. He added that as in the past, property taxes and the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) were the largest sources of revenue.

He stated that property tax revenue would increase from \$1,703,467 last year, to approximately \$1,822,709.69 this year. The increase would also depend on the millage rate remaining the same when Council votes in August. He added that the anticipated property tax amount was 15.3% of the proposed budget. He pointed out that the national average for property tax revenue at the municipal level was approximately 30%. He stated that a constitutional change would soon go to voters regarding capping property assessments at 3% per year. That would make it difficult for municipalities to keep the millage rate the same and depend on property taxes. He added that the Town's property tax revenue was expected to be \$1.8 million and the cost to run the police department was roughly \$2.5 million. The Town's millage rate remains one of the lowest in the state. The average was 8 mills and the Town is 2.889 mills. Mr. Perkins stated that there was an overall decrease in the budget of 32.12%.

He stated that members of the Council asked for examples of the budget with a 3% and a 4% employee raise. The base budget was \$11.9 million, with a 3% raise it would be a little over \$12 million, and with a 4% raise the budget would be an increase of \$109,266.99. That would bring the baseline to \$12,033,571.55. He added that some employees' salaries would come from the Sewer Fund. He explained that with a 3% raise, the total increase would be \$2,400 from the Sewer Fund and a 4% raise would be \$3,200, \$112,509.96 total.

Mr. Perkins reminded Council that Ms. Newland requested a part-time Library Assistant in the amount of \$17,803.38. He, Ms. Newland, and Ms. Beach could justify the need for an additional employee with the increased Library statistics.

He highlighted the 2017 SPLOST budget at \$4.3 million with \$3.5 million for the Palmetto/Senoia/Arrowood Rd roundabout and \$300,000 for Parks which included the Handley Park restroom and pavilion. It also included \$500,000 for gateway signage, streetscapes, 881 Senoia Road renovations, and the GTIB loan payments.

The 2023 SPLOST budget was \$3.9 million which included \$585,000 for downtown intersection improvements, and \$550,000 for sewer system improvements. \$1.9 million was for Public Works projects, and \$905,000 for park improvements which included the pavilion and stage. That would be the first phase of the Shamrock Park improvements.

Mr. Perkins stated that the Founders Day budget increased by \$11,250 to \$61,777. He stated that assuming no pay increases, the Sewer Fund decreased by \$370,000.

Mr. Perkins summarized and stated that staff have been aggressively trying to accomplish projects, however, roadblocks happen, leaving more on their plates.

This year he asked staff to be more realistic about what projects need to be completed and what projects could begin now. Changes were made which decreased the budget.

Mayor Dial wanted to clarify the language the Town has “used Surplus”. It did not mean that Surplus was spent, it meant that money was “moved” to balance the budget.

Mayor Dial asked for more clarification regarding the comparisons of millage rates. He would like to see comparisons only within Georgia. Mr. Perkins shared that the average rate in Georgia was 30 mills. Mayor Dial agreed that it was not always apples to apples due to the different services offered and the split between cities and counties. Mr. Perkins stated that it was similar to creating a pay study, every city was different.

Mayor Dial also mentioned the 2017 and 2023 SPLOST funds. He asked Ms. Beach if \$4.335 million was the final total. Ms. Beach stated yes, however, it did not include interest. She added that the anticipated amount was \$9 million but the Town collected over \$11 million. Mr. Perkins clarified that the 2017 SPLOST collection ended last June, and any revenue would be from interest. Mayor Dial stated that comparatively, the 2023 SPLOST collection increased by \$2 million. Ms. Beach agreed and added that to date, the Town had collected more than anticipated.

Council Member Campbell asked for clarification on the Pendleton Dam funding. Mr. Perkins stated that the entire project costs \$2 million with \$1.5 million being funded by an anticipated Federal Grant and \$500,000 would come from the General Fund.

2. Administration & Finance - Brandon Perkins, Town Manager | Sandra Beach, Finance Manager

Mr. Perkins stated that the Personnel Services and Employee Benefits lines increased by 13% due to the proposed increase in medical and the approval of the retirement increase last year. The Supplies line decreased by 2%, Capital Outlay decreased by 73%. Last year’s budget had \$350,000 for sites and \$150,000 for site improvements for the Clark property. He added that the Public Work’s staff saved the Town a lot by performing some of the work themselves. This year, \$75,000 was included for site improvements so staff could move forward with the temporary parking site at that location and for the possibility of supplemental funding at 881 Senoia Road.

He shared that \$10,000 was placed for the Municipal Complex and \$50,000 for a new Admin. Vehicle, which should not be the total amount. He added that he placed \$50,000 in Contingencies just in case of an emergency. He explained that Debt Services was the debt on the municipal building. The Other Financing Use line was a transfer from what was once from the Fayette County Development Authority and was now being transferred to the Downtown Development Authority for their needs, including First Friday events.

Ms. Beach explained that the wage increase was due to the Council-approved salary change in January. She added that another increase was due to an additional employee in her department. She also increased the Travel, Education & Training lines for the purpose of more training for her and her staff. She increased the Books & Periodicals line for the purchase of a current and required audit book.

She added that most of her lines decreased, however, the SBITA line increased as did everyone else's due to the new subscription audit requirement. She stated that ADP increased as it did every year.

3. FY25 Municipal Court Budget Request - April Spradlin, Court Clerk

Ms. Spradlin stated that her budget had decreased by 19.47% due to the lack of Assigned Funds (ARPA). She added that staff was asking for a competitive 4% raise for the Prosecutor and Judge as they did a great job every year. For the Prosecutor it would total \$54 more a month and for the Judge, \$62 more. A change was to remove Technical Services, VC3 (IT), Courtware, and Justfoia (Open Records software) and add them to the SBITA line. She added that Dues and Fees and Education increased for continued certification requirements for staff and the Judge.

Council Member Campbell was not opposed but inquired about the 4% increase for the Prosecutor and the Judge. Ms. Spradlin explained that it was comparable to other municipalities.

4. FY25 Recreation and Founder's Day Budget Request - Lynda Owens, Recreation Manager

Ms. Owens stated that she was requesting an increase to the Founders Day line of \$10,000. She explained that the bands and sound were more expensive, and depending on the band, they may require a larger stage. Ms. Owens announced that out of this year's Founders Day budget of \$61,000, staff had already raised \$35,000 with plenty of time left. Mayor Dial asked if the new stage was built in time for Founders Day, how much money would that save. Ms. Owens stated that it would save the Town \$2,000.

Ms. Owens shared that the following lines have been increased, Technical Services, Equipment Rental, and Office Supplies. She added that Decorations have decreased from \$18,000 to \$8,000. She added that there was also a significant decrease in supplies.

A typographical error was found in the Water line and was corrected to reflect Water as \$1,7000.

Council Member Furr asked if anything was added to the budget for Christmas decorations. Ms. Owens stated that last year's budget was \$18,000, this year staff requested \$10,000. The reason was that a sleigh, reindeer, and a Santa mailbox were purchased.

She stated that this year more arches would be purchased to add along the Shamrock Park walking trail. Council Member Furr requested more Christmas lights.

Ms. Owens announced that the Tree Farm was trending down, and that interest was waning. She requested that Holiday Decorations be placed back at \$18,000 from the Water line change. Mr. Perkins announced that the Tennis Court resurfacing RFP would be ready soon to commence early next fiscal year.

Council Member Hunter requested that the Halloween candy budget be increased as staff ran out last year. Ms. Owens explained that all departments and Council's candy budget came from the Recreation budget, and she doubled the amount to \$1,500. She was excited to announce that staff would rent a large corn maze for the Halloween festivities.

Council Member Hunter also asked that the Easter budget be increased. Ms. Owens asked that the Special Program Supplies line be increased to \$9,000. She added that during the Easter Egg Hunt next year, there would be separate times for age groups to space the event out.

Council Member Whelan agreed with Council Members Furr and Hunter regarding additional lighting and beautification for downtown during the holiday season. Council Members Hunter and Whelan also suggested a banner across Senoia Road for the First Friday events. Ms. Owens stated that their request would come from the DDA budget.

5. FY25 Library Budget Request - Patty Newland, Librarian

Ms. Newland stated that other than a new part-time employee, the next largest change would be in the Book Purchase line. Print materials continue to increase. When materials are shipped they also include the plastic protective covers for movies and DVDs which were expensive. She shared that the Books & Periodicals line was lowered significantly due to the Library no longer carrying newspapers or magazines, everything was now online. She reminded everyone that the Library received federal and state funding to assist with running the Library. She added that a people tracker was installed to register peak visitation times, which would assist with any future staff needs.

6. FY25 Public Safety Budget Requests - Randy Mundy, Chief of Police

Chief Mundy informed Council that at the workshop he explained that with the extra funding (Assigned Funds), his department was able to replace some equipment not leaving too many needs. He stated that Council did request that an extra FLOCK camera be purchased.

Chief Mundy also reminded Council of the update in their record management system. The billing was according to the number of citations written. The drop date for the current system was October 1st. He stated that Justice One claimed that all of the bugs were worked out of the system and that it would also have an element that would benefit Court.

Chief Mundy stated that he was asking for 2 Ford F150's which were more durable. He explained that quotes only lasted for 30 days. Since the last quote, a fully built out truck, would be \$71,599.38 for two, \$143,198.76. He added in \$20,000 more due to the quote for the increase of the trucks, cameras, radar, and radios. The total for the line would be \$165,000.

Chief Mundy moved to Certifications and asked if basic instructors could be added that made .23 extra an hour. He also reminded Council of the discussion regarding paying Field Training Officers (FTO) an extra \$2 an hour while training. He asked for an additional \$1 an hour for the FTOs. Chief Mundy stated that it was time for their re-certification which meant that the auditors had to be fed and housed so extra was added to the budget.

Council Member Hunter asked how many citations were written in a month since the increase to the budget would be according to citation. Chief Mundy estimated an average of 100. The average payment to Justice One was \$1,605 a month. The new platform would average \$1,800 to \$1,840. Mr. Perkins asked about the learning curve. Chief Mundy stated that it averaged 4 hours, however, Justice One was asking for 1 ½ days of training.

Council Member Whelan asked if \$2 per hour was competitive enough for the FTO. Chief Mundy stated that across the board it was comparable. Council Member Campbell stated that it seemed low. Ms. Beach reminded everyone that they were not receiving anything for training currently.

A motion was made to increase the training officer's pay to more than \$2 an hour.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Whelan.
Voting Yea: Council Member Furr, Council Member Hunter.

Discussion took place regarding paying the FTOs with a flat rate or per hour. Chief Mundy recommended changing the dollar amount per hour, it would be more equitable.

Council Member Campbell amended his motion to reflect increasing the training officer pay to \$3 per hour. Council Member Whelan amended her second motion.

Voting Yea: Council Member Furr, Council Member Hunter.

Mayor Dial asked how that would affect the budget. Mr. Perkins assured Council that he would plug in the numbers to the new system and get back to them.

7. FY25 Planning and Zoning Budget Request - Phillip Trocquet, Asst. Town Manager

Mr. Trocquet noted that the largest increase was under Building Inspector Services by 42.8% due to the forthcoming new commercial construction. He explained that the Town paid Safebuilt for their services and there was also revenue from the permits.

There was an increase in inspection services. He added that the newly acquired Code Enforcement services, at this time, were not yet tractable. The main reason for the increase was the number of commercial buildings being constructed. He gave the example of the two buildings from the East Group along Hwy 74 that would begin soon. He added that two buildings in phase one of three would yield 30% of the entire annual revenue from permits.

He stated that under Technical Services decreased due to no current matching grants. He would also like to pursue updating the Town's GIS system for better efficiency.

Mr. Trocquet stated that there would be an increase in Capital Outlay Equipment due to the requested purchase of a new plotter. He reached the pros and cons of purchasing and leasing and the current lease was much more than a purchased plotter. The new plotter would also have a 5-year extended warranty and a 3-year supply warranty. The new plotter also could print canvas banners and utilize waterproof paper for public hearing signs and other notices.

Council Member Campbell inquired about the cost of supplies for the new plotter. Mr. Trocquet stated that paper was \$30 a roll. Ink was \$700 and over the five years of the current plotter, ink was replaced three times. A print head ran around \$500 and would be required once every three years.

8. FY25 Public Works and SPLOST Budget Requests - Scott Langford, Public Works Director

Mr. Langford stated that his budget decreased by 48.57 % decrease which amounted to just under \$5.3 million. The biggest increase to the budget was that of heavy equipment. He shared that they were asking for a compact track loader and a mini tractor. He stated that road repair had decreased by 17.6%, along with building maintenance, sidewalks, stormwater, and pond maintenance by 38.%.

He added that regarding the site improvements under the Capital budget, the pole barn parking lot would be placed on hold due to the timing. After all the work was completed, he estimated that the following fiscal year's budget would be better suited. He added that cart path improvements decreased and added that it would also be moved to the following budget due to the streetscape project.

Mr. Perkins explained that \$100,000 was placed in the General Fund budget for the Pendleton Dam project and \$1.5 million in the revenue side. He added that if the grant was awarded July 1, hypothetically, how much money would be spent within that fiscal year. Realistically, only \$100,00 would be spent within that fiscal year? He also reiterated that the grant was not a check, it was built on reimbursement.

Mr. Langford stated that there was no need to purchase any vehicles next fiscal year. Mayor Dial asked Mr. Langford if he had all the equipment he and his staff needed.

Mr. Langford stated that besides the two pieces mentioned earlier, they had all the equipment needed to perform their duties.

Council Member Campbell asked if the surplus equipment could be auctioned. Mr. Perkins explained that according to policy, after surplus, it normally went to the regular auction site. Council Member Campbell asked when the new dump truck would begin use including the tarp and markings. Mr. Langford stated that Mr. Bowman was currently getting everything in order.

Council Member Campbell was also concerned about Public Works having everything they needed. Mr. Langford shared that staff had met with Mr. Trocquet and everyone believed they were all set. To purchase anymore would take additional staff time. Mr. Trocquet added that staff also required additional real estate if more equipment was obtained.

Mr. Langford began a discussion regarding the concerns for how roads would be paved in the future along with funding the paving projects. He explained that in the past many subdivisions came along around the same time leaving the roads in need of repair at the same time. He stated that most of the subdivisions came along between 2002 to 2008. There were 20 subdivisions and 3 business parks built or paved at that time. Those roads would be coming due for paving soon. All of those roads totaled 24.9 miles of road which was 37% of the total roads that would need to be paved or repaired. He explained that the longer roads go unattended the quicker the decline. The goal after the new Pavement Condition Index (PCI) was approved, was to map out a six-year plan. He stated that staff was also assured that the newer roads had crack sealant when needed to prolong the paving process.

Council Member Furr inquired about the PCI. Mr. Langford stated that a PCI study was performed in 2016, and 2021. The new one was on the agenda for tomorrow night's meeting. Council Member stated for the record that Laurelwood Road was not resurfaced because she was a Council Member, and lived there, it was on the PCI list of roads in need. Mr. Perkins stated that the data from the PCI did protect Council Members.

Mr. Langford discussed the 2017 SPLOST budget. He stated that the largest item was the Palmetto/Arrowood/Spencer roundabout and added that it was currently under land acquisition which the legal team was working on. During that time, adjustments may need to be made, after that staff would place the project for bid. He added that all the funding for the project was placed in next year's fiscal budget. The other large item was the Handley Park restroom. He stated that the streetscaping project had begun at the Gunnin business strip.

Mr. Langford spoke regarding the 2023 SPLOST budget. He stated that the Intersection line increased due to the intersection improvements to Palmetto/Senoia Road 4-way and the possibility of a traffic signal.

The Road Paving & Repair line increased due to the LMIG project. He stated that the Dam Repair line increased due to the timing of the project and that the administration work was completed, now was time to begin the bidding process. Mr. Langford stated that the Cart Paths line had increased due to the Laurelwood and Tullamore paths.

Council Member Campbell began a discussion regarding improvements to the Senoia/Castlewood intersection by inquiring about the cost of flashing stop signs. Mr. Langford stated that one sign costs \$8,000. Mr. Langford stated that he would look at the crash data.

Council Members Furr and Campbell expressed their concerns for safety at that intersection. Council Member Furr also mentioned her concerns regarding how far back the stop line was on Crabapple Lane turning onto Senoia Road.

The discussion continued and focused on the left turn lane on Castlewood Road onto Senoia Road. Council Member Campbell suggested more flashing stop signs. Mr. Langford stated that a traffic study may reveal that a separate left turn lane may not be warranted.

A motion was made to obtain a traffic study at the intersection of Castlewood Road and Senoia Road to determine if the removal of the left lane is warranted or to increase the signage.

Motion made by Council Member Whelan, Seconded by Council Member Hunter.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Furr.

Council Member Whelan amended her motion to allocate \$15,000 for the traffic study. Council Member Hunter amended his second motion.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Furr.

Mr. Langford moved on to the Sewer Fund. The only increase would be for \$2,300 in Small Equipment, the Infrastructure and Contingency lines would decrease leaving the Sewer budget decreased by \$1.7 million. He then spoke regarding the Tree Fund. He stated that it increased due to increased revenue. That money would later assist with the streetscaping project.

9. FY25 Miscellaneous Funds Budgets - Sandra Beach, Finance Manager | Scott Langford, Public Works Director

Mr. Perkins wrapped up the budget discussions with the discussion regarding Council's view on the possibility of a 3% or 4% employee annual cost of living raise. He began the discussion due to the time constraints on staff to prepare the final draft budget before the public hearing on June 6th. Council Member Campbell asked what the typical raise was in the past. Mr. Perkins stated that in the past, Council usually approved a 4% raise.

He added that in 2022 there was a 10% raise mid-year (the County and Cities gave raises) and another 4% during budget season, the year before was at 4% also.

Mr. Perkins added that typically, over the last few years, it was at 4%. He clarified that by including staff within the Sewer budget, a 4% raise would be an increase of \$112,509.96.

A motion was made to approve a 4% employee pay increase for Fiscal Year 24/25.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Furr.
Voting Yea: Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS: *The second public comment period is for any issue. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.*

XII. STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Perkins shared that Mr. Trocquet would be out next week Tuesday through Thursday for the UGA, Certified Public Manager's (CPM) course graduation. The course had lasted a year, and he was very proud of his accomplishment. Mr. Perkins added that he would also be at UGA for the CPA Alumni course during that time and would attend Mr. Trocquet's graduation.

He thanked staff for their hard work on this year's budget, including working on new financial software.

Mr. Langford (inaudible) stated that staff would work on the Brunswick manhole bids and that it would be brought to Council soon.

Mayor Dial inquired about the grate at the Town Hall entrance. Mr. Perkins stated that Mr. Langford and Mr. Carson had been working on a way to stabilize the grate. In the meantime, it was repaired for the 3rd or 4th time and the cone seemed to help the situation.

XIII. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Furr asked if the grass could be cut along the Tyrone Road cart path. Mr. Langford (inaudible) stated that it was already taken care of by Aabby.

Council Member Campbell thanked Mr. Perkins, Ms. Beach, and staff for preparing the budget. He also welcomed the Elks to Tyrone as they now met in the Recreation Center.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell.

Voting Yea: Council Member Furr, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter.

By: _____
Eric Dial, Mayor

Attest: _____
Dee Baker, Town Clerk