

Town of Fletcher
Budget Retreat Meeting
May 1, 2021
Minutes

Call the meeting to order at: 09:05 am

Those who were in attendance are as follows:

Mayor Rod Whiteside
Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy
Councilman Preston Blakely
Councilwoman Sheila Franklin
Councilman Eddie Henderson
Town Manager Mark Biberdorf
Assistant Town Manager Heather Taylor
Town Clerk Christine Thompson

Town Manager Mark Biberdorf gave a power point presentation on the proposed budget for the 21/22 FY.

Overview of Proposed FY 2021-2022 Budget

Balanced Budget presented totaling \$8,040,116 in revenues and expenses.

This is an increase of \$416,624 from the FY 20-21 Budget.

Impacts to our budget were not as bad as originally expected, causing us to lower our base significantly last year as compared to FY 19-20 (\$7.59 million).

The proposed tax rate for Fletcher would remain at 34 cents under this recommended budget.

22.5 cents of the .34 cent tax rate supports services directly provided by the town.

The remaining 11.5 cents of the tax rate goes to contracted fire protection services.

No additional full-time positions recommended in this budget (remain at 38 FTE)

Most increases are for equipment, supplies, and contract services related items.

1.3% COLA this year due to Social Security cost of living measure going up.

Only 1.3% increase to stay with existing health insurance plan and a 2% increase on dental.

Since revenues came in better than expected able to address more capital and contract service needs.

Developed and approved a new 5 yr. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Dramatic growth for 2021 coming off pandemic conditions (Projected GDP growth of 6%)

Inflation occurring in the 1.4%-1.8% range.

Interest rates should rise but only slightly at this point (Ten Year Treasury Note and Mortgages).

NC's economic outlook points toward continued strong growth in the coming year.

Gross State Product (GSP) for NC projected to grow by 5.1% in 2021.

Manufacturing is continuing to grow and housing starts are continuing to pick up speed.

Local Economic Factors

Residential growth occurring (Sycamore Cottages- 151 unit development with Phase 2 underway; BSC Holdings for 311 unit development; Single Family home subdivision on Rutledge Road).

Commercial/Industrial growth continues to be strong-low impact Technologies Mainetti – 300,000 s.f. facility, and developer looking at project on property adjacent to Blue Ridge Metals.

Retail sales projected to be very strong for the state and locally.

Revenue Outlook

Ad Valorem values projected to increase from \$1,398,191,000 to 1,393,404,000.

Largest portion of increase in values is from real improvements-new construction.

Motor Vehicles grew by the second largest amount from the prior year.

Individual Personal Property values contributed slightly too projected growth.

Business Personal Property decreased but not all BPP Listings have been processed.

1% increase (additional \$23,951) in real and personal property taxes.

18% increase (additional \$2,000) in 2019 Taxes & Prior Years.

14% increase (additional \$1,000) in Tax Interest.

2% increase (additional \$600) in Beer & Wine Tax.

25% increase (additional \$380,190) in Local Sales Tax.

38% increase (additional \$2,000) in ABC Law Enforcement.

25% increase (additional \$2,000) in Lease Revenue

30% increase (additional \$60,000) in ABC Distribution

94% decrease (drop of \$31,000) in Interest on Investments.

17% decrease (drop of \$100) in Powell Bill Interest.

5% decrease (drop of \$32,900) in Utilities Sales Tax.

2% decrease (drop of 1,300) in Cable Franchise

7% decrease (drop of \$14,000) in Powell Bill.

25% decrease (drop of \$5,000) in Sale of Fixed Assets.

Budget Requests

Budget Requests initially came in \$209,000 above prior year revenues.

No additional full-time or part-time positions requested this year.

Increase in incentives for Low Impact Technologies locating to Fletcher
(Project Helios)

Increase in planning budget for storm water permit compliance measures.

Replacement of entryway sign at the north end of Town.

Demolition of buildings for Town Center project.

Uniform upgrades for the Police Department with use of ballistic vest outer carries.

Contact service support for policy updates with Police Department general orders.

Increase in contract services with One Who Serves (IT support).

New trash and recycling carts for replacement and additional households.

Replacement mower for Public Works

Water Fountain replacement in front of Town Hall.

Golf cart replacement for Parks & Rec.

Increase in park maintenance costs.

Greenway/Streambank repair line item added.

Expense requests funded with current tax rate 34 cents.

Reductions or additions in some line items were made at the Manager's
recommendation.

Governing Body

Small increase in overall funding for this department going from \$52,024 to \$52,191.

Slight increase in salaries line item for 1.3% COLA from \$37,523 to \$ 38,011.

Increase in FICA line from \$3,043 to \$3,080.

Travel & Training decreased slightly from \$6,000 to \$5,500.

Dues and Subscriptions line increased from \$245 to \$355.

Liability Insurance increased slightly from \$278 to \$310.

Administration

Moderate increase in total departmental appropriations from \$572,887 to \$ 600,301.

Largest increase is in Salaries from \$399,637 to \$419,370.

Moderate increases for fringe benefit line items (Retirement sees biggest impact)

Fuel Expense decreased from \$4,400 to \$800 due to moving Manager Car allowance to salaries.

Motor Vehicle Expense increased from \$11,400 to \$13,200 due to expense to collect motor vehicle taxes from the state.

Significant increase in departmental budget from \$128,600 to \$343,988.

Added Greenway/Streambank line at \$25,000.

Town Center line increased from \$30,000 to \$200,000 mostly to cover demo of buildings.

Economic Development line increased from \$45,000 to \$52,088 due to incentives.

Elections/Consultants increased to \$10,000 for municipal elections.

Planning Department

Moderate increase in total departmental appropriation going from \$161,058 to \$186,291.

Biggest increase is new Storm Water Program line at \$50,950.

Mayor-Pro Tem Bob Davy asked about the additional funding for storm water since this is mostly administrative costs.

Discussion Followed:

This is somewhat offset by Contract Services line decreasing from \$31,000 to \$1,000.

Slight adjustments to salary and fringe benefit lines due to merit pay ad COLA.

Travel & Training and Fuels Expense lines are decreased slightly.

Town Facilities

A slight increase in total departmental appropriations from \$131,138 to \$140,580

Utilities line increased from \$ 61,000 to \$62,750 due to higher electric and gas bills.

Advertisements line decreased from \$3,000 to \$ 2,600 due to slightly less usage.

Contract Services line increased from \$13,500 to \$20,500 for new entryway signage on Hwy. 25 (north end of town)

Possibly fund sign for south entrance next year.

Police Department

A moderate increase in the overall budget going from \$1,592,134 to \$1,664,203.

Most of the expense increase associated with adjustments to salary fringe line items with COLA and merit included.

Overtime was increased from \$14,000 to \$17,000 to help with gaps in staffing.

Holiday Pay increased from \$25,300 to \$27,650 due to salary increases.

LEO Separation Allowance increases slightly from \$8,364 to \$8,599 based on formula.

Dues and Subscriptions line increased from \$3,628 to \$ 27,628 for Lexipol policy assistance on general orders.

The Dues and Subscriptions line should decrease by \$13,000 in year two since startup costs for initial review and policy development will be complete.

Increase in Uniforms line from \$15,500 to \$25,500 due to purchase of ballistic vest outer carriers.

All other line items are level or no increase or decrease.

Councilman Preston Blakely asked about the use of reserve officers to help with overtime etc.

Town Manager Mark Biberdorf commented that he would like to discuss this with the new police chief.

Councilwoman Sheila Franklin stated with the labor pool that way it is now trying to find quality people may be an issue right now.

Discussion Followed:

IT Department

One Who Serves continues to provide high quality support to a cost effective price.

Slight decrease in overall department budget from \$210,280 to \$201,080.

This is mostly due to no capital related projects being IT's operating budget

Increase in Contract line from \$57,000 to \$63,180 due to switch to flat-rate billing model (instead of former hourly billing).

Increase in Telephone line from \$45,250 to \$47,500 due to internet and phone system increases.

Decrease in dues line from \$37,420 to \$ 33,940 due to moving of expense for RecDesk software to Subscriptions IT.

Subscription IT line increased by \$3,480 to account for RecDesk software annual maintenance fee.

Larger capital projects for A/V System Upgrade and Microsoft Office Upgrade in the CIP budget.

Discussion Followed on the increase/adjustment to the overall department increase due the change in how services are billed.

Contracted Services Fletcher Fire & Rescue

Fletcher Fire & Rescue (FF&R) will receive what the tax levy produces on 11.5 cents of the Town's 34 cent tax rate this year.

Total appropriations for FF&R will increase from \$1,431,071 to \$1,443,113.

Also budget \$24,000 for prior year adjustment.

Contracted Services Mills River Fire & Rescue

Mills River Fire & Rescue's portion of the tax rate will remain at 11 cents this year.

Total appropriations for Mills River will decrease from \$152,114 to \$144,792.

This appropriation may change slightly as we receive final property value estimates from the county.

Public Works

Moderate increase in total departmental appropriations from \$1,141,610 to \$1,224,641.

Purchase recycling and garbage carts for replacement and new households being served (\$33,000)

Replacement scag mower at \$16,500.

Repair of water fountain in front of Town Hall at \$16,000.

Salaries line sees moderate increase for merit and COLA adjustments from \$378,570 to \$384,525.

Fringe benefit line items increased for merit and COLA adjustments.

Increase in M & R Town Facilities from \$74,000 to \$ 98,000 primarily for fountain repair.

Council recommends turning a water fountain into a planter due to constant costly repairs.

Increase in Fuel Expenses from & 24,500 to \$25,500 for increased fuel consumption.

M & R Vehicles increased from \$34,000 to \$38,000 due to increased age on vehicles.

Department Supplies line increased from \$8,000 to \$41,000 for trash and recycling cart purchase.

Landfill Charges line increasing from \$105,000 to \$110,000 due to volume increase and new households being added.

\$16,500 for new mower in Capital Outlay.

Decrease in funding for Powell Bill revenues from \$197,000 to \$183,000.

\$183,000 budgeted on the revenue and expense side.

This is primarily used for re-surfacing of streets.

Parks & Recreation

Slight decrease in overall departmental appropriation for \$ 660,472 to \$659,386.

Lowering of part-time salaries line helped to reduce the overall budget as well as fewer capital requests.

No new full-time or part-time positions requested this year.

Replacement of golf cart is the only capital request at \$7,000

Part-Time Salary decreased from \$86,200 to \$81,000 due to leasing out operation of Concession Stand.

Increase in Holiday Decorations from \$5,000 to \$7,000 for additional lights.

Fuel Expense decreased from \$8,100 to \$7,000 since less funds needed.

Golf Tournament expense decreased from \$5,000 to \$4,000 due to smaller tournament.

Concessions decreased from \$7,000 to \$2,000 due to leasing out the facility.

Capital Outlay at \$7,000 for replacement of golf cart.

Physicals/Drug line decreased from \$1,800 to \$900 since less expense needed.

M & R Equipment line decreased from \$8,000 to \$7,000 due to less expense needed.

Park Maintenance line increased from \$45,000 to \$ 53,000 for additional trail material and purchase of a new blower and trail groomer.

Capital Improvement Budget within CIP

Recommended capital budget includes \$.085 of the tax levy to fund eligible projects.

\$.085 generates \$1,172,550 in revenue for FY 2021-2022.

\$.065 would be dedicated for projects supported by debt service and the remaining \$.02 would be for non-debt service projects, or pay as you go.

The amount of levy available for debt service supported projects will be \$896,656.

Amount of levy available for new projects without debt will be \$275,894.

CIP-Debt Service

Town Hall Improvement Project; Highway 25 Land Acquisition; and Garbage Truck

Debt service for the Town Hall project will be \$ 556,544

Debt service for the HWY 25 Land Acquisition project will be \$172,812.

Debt service for the Garbage Truck is estimated at \$105,000.

Surplus debt service available is \$62,301.

Mayor-Pro-Tem Bob Davy suggested that with funds received from sale of development property to possibly use some of these funds to pay off the garbage truck.

Discussion Followed:

Recommend payment to Unassigned Fund Balance with surplus debt service funds.

CIP – Non-Debt Service or Pay as you go Projects

Police Vehicles (3) Patrol cars - \$119,500

Microsoft Office Upgrade - \$30,000

Town Hall Audio Visual System - \$45,000

Surplus non-debt service funds available is \$81,394.

Recommend payment to Unassigned Fund Balance with surplus with non-debt service funds.

Mayor Whiteside asked for a motion to adjourn and it was so moved by Councilwoman Sheila Franklin and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy and Councilman Preston Blakely.

Motion Carries all in favor.

Adjourned: 11:50 am

Approved:

6-14-21
Date

Rod A. Whiteside
Mayor Rod Whiteside

Town of Fletcher
Agenda Review Meeting
Minutes
May 3, 2021

Call the meeting to order at: 06:00 pm

Those who were in attendance are as follows:

Mayor Rod Whiteside
Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy
Councilman Eddie Henderson
Councilman Preston Blakely
Councilwoman Sheila Franklin
Town Manager Mark Biberdorf

Invocation:

Pledge of Allegiance:

Public Comments

Mr. John Olsen of 33 Stoney Brook Court Fletcher spoke on his appreciation for the Fletcher police officers who handled a matter in his subdivision this past weekend.

Approval of minutes-corrections, additions or deletions.
(4/5, 4/12)

No comment was made on the minutes at this time.

Council Updates

Councilman Preston Blakely gave an update from the recent LGCCA meeting that he attended.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Budget Amendment #5 to the FY 20/21 Budget Ordinance.
Approval of Audit contract with Lowdermilk & Church for FY 20/21.

Mayor Whiteside asked for comments from council on the consent agenda items concerning the \$20,000 budget amendment for stream bank repairs and the audit contract with Lowdermilk & Church.

There were no comments from council at this time.

Annual presentation from Asheville Regional Airport-Lew Bleiweis, Executive Director.

Mayor Whiteside stated that we would get the annual update next week from Lew Bleiweis on the Asheville Airport at next week's meeting.

Resolution to consider lease arrangement for farm property behind town hall-Mark Biberdorf, Town Manager.

Mayor Whiteside asked council were there any questions (memo in packet) on the lease arrangement for town property.

There were no questions at this time from council.

Comments from the Town Manager Mark Biberdorf.

He thanked council for being available this past Saturday to discuss the proposed upcoming budget for FY 21/22.

The recent Governor's update on COVID-19 that took effect Friday. Masks still have to be worn indoors but not outdoors. Gatherings increased indoors from 50 to 100 and outdoors to 200. Indoors for business occupancy limits have not changed. The numbers are coming down at hospitals as well.

On the Budget process we will get final value estimate May 15 from the assessor's office for property taxes and ad valorem. So we will adjust the budget numbers as that comes in and probably appropriated fund balance and make the one change and remove the fountain and take that off. Then working on the budget message

and then we will advertise and have the budget available for public comment and review on May 27. Any other changes and we will keep you updated on that.

On the Town Center project as we are working with WGLA engineering and the developer they would like move to accelerate the process to have an economic development agreement and purchase and sale agreement done. (Instead of letter of intent) I have spoken to Sanford Holshouser (law firm) and they are willing to get work on an economic development agreement. I emailed you on this to follow up on the time line on this.

On the senate bill 349/HB 401/ on housing opportunities and there is a Resolution that was passed by Flat Rock and Mills River. Is council interested in passing this Resolution as the way the bill is written it takes away the authority of the municipality to regulate housing?

Setting up meetings with legislators, I have a meeting set up with Senator Edwards for May 21 at 4:00 here. Mayor and Bob will make it to this meeting. I am trying to get Senator Moffitt at this meeting as well but I have not heard from him as of yet.

Mayor Whiteside asked for a motion to adjourn and it was so moved by Councilman Eddie Henderson and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy.

Motion carries all in favor.

Adjourned: 06:16 pm

Approved:

6-14-21
Date


Mayor Rod Whiteside

Town of Fletcher
Regular Meeting
Minutes
May 10, 2021

Call the meeting to order at: 06:00 pm

Those who were in attendance are as follows:

Mayor Rod Whiteside
Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy
Councilwoman Sheila Franklin
Councilman Eddie Henderson
Councilman Preston Blakely
Town Manager Mark Biberdorf

Invocation: Mayor Whiteside asked for a moment of silence for all those people that lost their lives due to the corona virus.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Whiteside led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

None at this time.

Approval of minutes-corrections, additions or deletions.
(4/5, 4/12)

Mayor Whiteside asked for any corrections, additions or deletions to the minutes as presented and if not do we have a motion to approve.

Councilman Preston Blakely said that he would make that motion and it was seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy.

Motion carries all in favor.

Council Updates

Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy went over the most recent DOT projects that are currently taking place in Henderson and Buncombe counties. (See attached)

Consent Agenda

Approval of Budget Amendment #5 to the FY 20/21 Budget Ordinance
Approval of Audit contract with Lowdermilk & Church for FY 20/21

Mayor Whiteside asked were there any comments or questions on the consent agenda and if not do we have a motion to approve.

Councilman Eddie Henderson stated that he would make that motion to approve and it was seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy.

Motion carries all in favor.

Annual presentation from Asheville Regional Airport-Lew Bleiweis, Executive Director.

Executive Director Lew Bleiweis gave an annual update on the Asheville Regional Airport and answered questions that council had for him on the current projects that they are working on.

Discussion Followed:

Resolution opposing Senate Bill 349/HB 401 Increasing Housing Opportunities-Mark Biberdorf, Town Manager.

Mayor Whiteside asked council if they had any questions on Senate Bill 349/HB 401?

Town Manager Mark Biberdorf gave an overview on this bill and what it contains and how it takes away the decision from the council as to the regulations on residential property

Mayor Whiteside asked do we have motion to approve this Resolution. Councilman Preston Blakely said that he would make that motion and it was seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy.

Motion carries all in favor.

Resolution to consider lease arrangement from farm property behind town hall-Mark Biberdorf, Town Manager.

Mayor Whiteside asked council if there was any discussion/questions on the Resolution to lease property behind town hall.

No questions or comments were made on the Resolution or lease agreement by council.

Mayor Whiteside asked for a motion on the Resolution and it was so moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy and seconded by Councilman Eddie Henderson.

Motion carries all in favor.

Comments from the Town Manager Mark Biberdorf.

COVID-19 updates nothing new from last week on this. Masks are still required indoors and not as much outside. Indoor 50 to 100 people, Outdoor 100 to 200 people.

On the Budget process as I mentioned last week we will still get another set of revenues from the assessor's office on our property tax values. Once I receive that I will update our figures and then I will be working on the budget message this month. It will be available by no later than June 1st and we are advertising on May 27. I will send you a copy of the budget message once it is completed and we will have a draft and a budget message done for public comment/review. There is no increase in the tax rate or change in revaluation this year.

On the town center project we have gone past the letter of intent to a developer/development agreement and we have met with the attorneys on that. We have also got a revised timeline (shared via email) and maybe go for a six month so that we can get some due diligence done and after that go to a closing.

On the water system improvement project; as you know they are doing work on the new pump station at the intersection of Woodhill and Hwy 25. In order to connect to the water main on Hwy 25 they are going to have to shut Woodhill down for a period of 4 days. As you know there is another way out of South Chase and we are coordinating with the attorney for the City of Hendersonville and what we are looking at is May 24 through May 27 to completely shut down that area to include that lane on Hwy 25. We will send out a robo call to notify residents of this shut down and there will be an electronic message board as well.

On the meetings with Legislative delegation we have a meeting set up with Senator Edwards's office on Friday May 21 at 4:00.

Senator Burr's office a meeting is set up for May 25.

Mayor Whiteside asked for a motion to adjourn and it was so moved by Councilman Eddie Henderson and seconded by Councilman Preston Blakely.

Motion carries all in favor.

Adjourned: 06:27 pm.

Approved:

6-14-21
Date


Mayor Rod Whiteside

DOT Road Projects Affecting Fletcher

[illegible]