

Town of Fletcher
Agenda Review Meeting
Minutes
May 2, 2022

Call the meeting to order at: 06:00 pm

Those who were in attendance are as follows:

Mayor Preston Blakely
Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy
Councilwoman Sheila Franklin
Councilman Trevor Lance
Councilman Keith Reed
Town Manager Mark Biberdorf
Parks & Recreation Director Greg Walker

Presentation of Proclamation for Mental Health Awareness Month by Mayor Blakely.
(Regular Meeting)

Moment of Silence:

Pledge of Allegiance:

Public Comment

John Olsen 30 Stoney Brook Court Fletcher commented on Emily Hawkins a student of North Henderson High School who was in a terrible wreck. He asked that you keep her in your thoughts as she is currently in the healing process.

Approval of minutes-corrections, additions or deletions.
(4/4, 4/11)

No comments were made on the minutes at this time.

Council Updates

Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy commented on the golf tournament this past Saturday and that his team won a trophy.

Mayor Blakely commented on the presentation ceremony of the story trail at Kate & Pete's park on Friday. He thanked Parks & Recreation for doing a great job.

Councilwoman Sheila Franklin commented on the recent meetings she attended with the Water & Sewer Advisory Board, Henderson County Economic Meeting and a Fletcher Fire & Rescue meeting.

Consent Agenda

Tax refunds/releases

No comment was made on the Consent Agenda at this time.

Presentation on estimated costs for extension of Cane Creek Greenway-Jason Seickel, Equinox Environmental.

Town Manager Mark Biberdorf stated that he wanted to have a presentation/update on this project since we have some new councilmembers and he will be here next week and run through the slides on the route options.

Update on benchmarking and performance measures research- Mark Biberdorf, Town Manager.

Town Manager Mark Biberdorf our goal is to try and help identify some performance measures and efficiency standards to our services that we provide to residents. The School of Government has engaged in this project and is calling it Benchmarking 2.0.

Discussion Followed:

Discussion on letter of support for Advent Health's proposal to develop and acute care hospital in Buncombe County-Preston Blakely, Mayor.

Mayor Blakely stated that Advent Health applied for a certificate of need to build a 62 bed care facility in Buncombe County. (NC general law requires this) I saw Graham Fields who is the president of Advent Health and he is seeking letters of support to submit with their application. Mayor Blakely stated that Advent health has also been a great partner in our area as far as health care goes.

Discussion Followed:

Council agrees to move this letter to the consent agenda for approval next week.

**Discussion on summer concert series being held at Blue Ghost Brewery-
Preston Blakely, Mayor.**

Mayor Blakely spoke on the memo in the packet stating that he supports keeping the summer concerts at Blue Ghost Brewery as the concerts have better attendance at the brewery then when they are held at Bill Moore Community Park. This also is supporting local businesses and Blue Ghost Brewery donates a percentage of their profits from the concerts back to the Park Development Fund. Also, Parks & Recreation is currently experiencing staffing shortages and this creates a strain on the department to have the concerts at the park. It is my suggestion that all concerts for the summer of 2022 be moved to Blue Ghost Brewery.

Discussion Followed:

Comments from the Town Manager Mark Biberdorf.

On the town center project all the buildings have been removed except for the 3 in the railroad right of way. I communicated back with DH Griffin who will start removing the 3 remaining buildings this week. With that once they are done with it the site will be cleared.

The developer is continuing to work on some due diligence items and one thing hanging out there is the traffic impact analysis. They are meeting with DOT going over the results with them on Thursday. They were ok with two of the three items which were adding a turning lane out of the one access point off of Hwy 25 and reconfiguration of the traffic signal at Howard Gap and Highway 25. The big one that they are having some push back on is adding a right turn lane here onto Hwy 25 at the intersection of East Fanning Bridge Road. The developer feels that they should not have to bear the cost of that as it was already needed there by DOT. The results go to Raleigh and we have to get some determination as to what is needed at the intersection.

Discussion Followed:

Repairs to town hall are coming along from the toilet leak (flooding) back in February. The contractor is nearing completion on it and we are hoping later this month that it will all be completed. They did do the investigation with an engineer and did determine that our pressure reduction valve was cracked and they are not sure why and they are sending it to a lab. At this point they do not think that they will be able to tie it to the faulty valve at the intersection of Cane Creek and Mills Gap Road.

Christine had provided you with the power point presentation on Ethics that was a part of the Essentials of Municipal Government training that Keith Reed and Trevor Lance went to recently. Ethics is a required part of the training and there is a few instances where you can recuse yourself from voting and they articulated in the power point when that might be. If you have any questions or would like me to go over this let me know.

Discussion Followed:

We have had some more requests for traffic studies. We did a traffic survey on Pressley Hill Road and the results did not warrant the changes that they requested as they wanted speed bumps in there. We currently have requests for Tulip Tree Court and Fanning Bridge Road. DOT has been contacted about Fanning Bridge Road and Public works will be setting up a traffic study on Tulip Tree Court.

We have our Budget Retreat meeting on Wednesday May 4 we will meet at Kosta's for breakfast at 8:00 am and then come back here to start the meeting at 9:00 am.

The Shred/pill drop event we had back on April 23 and a good turnout with about 5,000 to 6,000 pounds of paper turned in. I don't have the total amount of medications turned in yet as the police department has not turned them into the Sheriff's office as of yet.

Mayor Blakey asked for a motion to adjourn and it was so moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy and seconded by Councilman Keith Reed

Motion carries all in favor.

Adjourned: 06:50 pm

Approved:

6-13-22
Date

Preston Blakey
Mayor Preston Blakely

Town of Fletcher
Town Council Meeting
Minutes
May 9, 2022

Call the meeting to order at: 06:02 pm

Those who were in attendance are as follows:

Mayor Preston Blakely
Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy
Councilwoman Sheila Franklin
Councilman Trevor Lance
Councilman Keith Reed
Town Manager Mark Biberdorf

Presentation of Proclamation for Mental Health Awareness Month by Mayor Blakely.

Mayor Blakely read and presented the proclamation on Mental Health Awareness.

Moment of Silence or reflection

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

Public Comment

None at this time.

Approval of minutes-corrections, additions or deletions.
(4/4, 4/11)

Mayor Blakely asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Councilman Trevor Lance stated that he would make that motion and it was seconded by Councilman Keith Reed.

Motion carries all in favor.

Council Updates

Councilwoman Sheila Franklin distributed the recent Water & Sewer report she received from the committee meeting that she attended and said that if anyone had any questions that she would be glad to answer them.

Consent Agenda

Tax refunds/releases

Approval of letter in support for Advent Health's proposal to develop an acute care hospital in Buncombe County.

Mayor Blakely asked if anyone had any questions on the Consent Agenda and if not do we have a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and it was so moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy and seconded by Councilman Trevor Lance.

Motion carries all in favor.

Presentation on estimated costs for extension of Cane Creek Greenway-Jason Seickel, Equinox Environmental.

Mayor Blakely introduced Jason Seickel who gave an updated presentation on the Cane Creek Greenway.

Updated cost estimates are as follows:

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Option A with crushed stone trail: | \$1,680,266.00 |
| Option B with paved trail (phase 1 & 2) | \$5,618,209.00 |

Overall the paved trail would be less maintenance/labor in the long run due to possible flooding from heavy rains and having to replace the crushed stone on occasion.

Discussion Followed:

Council agrees to proceed with this project and would like to see what grants are available as well as to use some ARP funds for this project.

Update on benchmarking and performance measures research- Mark Biberdorf, Town Manager.

Town Manager Mark Biberdorf stated that he did not have much more to go over on this after last week but that he did email council the spreadsheet on Benchmarking 2.0 data. I am spending more time with department heads to see what we can implement from this and we are hiring a summer intern to work on this. Interviews are set up for Wednesday.

Discussion Followed:

**Discussion on summer concert series being held at Blue Ghost Brewery-
Preston Blakely, Mayor.**

Mayor Blakely stated that he made clear on his position on this to move all the summer concerts for 2022 to Blue Ghost Brewery. That is benefits staff and that there will be other concerts at Bill Moore Community park.

Discussion Followed:

Mayor Blakely asked for a motion to direct staff to move the 2022 concerts to Blue Ghost if feasible.

Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy stated that he would make that motion.

There was no second on this motion therefore motion dies.

Comments from the Town Manager Mark Biberdorf

On the town center “demo” project as you can see the final three buildings have been removed and there was some utility issues. It is essentially nearing completion and really happy this has gone forward without any issues.

Last week I mentioned that the developer did a traffic impact analysis and they shared the results with DOT at a meeting last week. DOT is coming back with some other improvements on Hwy 25 that we have not heard of before. They are talking about adding another light in-between Fanning Bridge, Hwy 25 and Howard Gap Road. A traffic circle going back in at Hwy 25 and Fanning Bridge and I know we spent some time doing a Resolution in opposition. Apparently, that is not completely off the table. After a long meeting discussing the improvements that just came out of the traffic impact analysis was another turn lane at the project site, some improvements to the signalization at Howard Gap and Hwy 25. Then the right turn lane from Fanning Bridge on Hwy 25 heading east. At this point DOT has to take it back to their traffic congestion management group (Raleigh) and they are trying to set up a meeting with our local DOT.

Discussion Followed:

The repairs on the flooding to town hall are nearing completion they are just waiting on some materials to come in. It should be done in May.

I shared with you a PowerPoint presentation on ethics training from the Essentials of Municipal Government seminar and I encourage you to look at this especially at the areas on voting.

Discussion Followed:

I mentioned last week the request for traffic survey studies on Pressley Hill & Tulip Tree Court. The one on Pressley Hill has been completed and the results were not much different than last time (2 years ago) the data is not supporting anything to the level of speed bumps which was what was requested. This month the traffic monitoring equipment will go out on Tulip Tree Court. The results will be at the June meeting.

Discussion Followed:

On the budget process, we held our budget retreat last week and I thank you for a lot of good feedback. We have our recommended budget and are making some tweaks based on the feedback we received. That next step will be the budget message and draft of the budget that will be available by June 1 for public comment. Then we will advertise for the public hearing for regular meeting in June will be our next steps. The biggest things is that we will be looking at those courts (tennis & basketball) in the CIP.

The shred event collected within the 5,000 to 6,000 pound range. I do not have the amount of pills collected at this time.

Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy mentioned the ARP funds and sewer additions in the Westfield area of town. He suggested that Eric Rufa do a survey of how many people/homes are interested because he stated that if we only have a few people who are interested and the others aren't then there is no sense in spending that kind of money to put a system in.

Another issue is the voting districts in town he stated that he thinks it is time to either redraw the voting districts or do away with them all together. He suggested that Planning & Zoning Director Eric Rufa do a study of how many homes are in each district.

Discussion Followed:

Mayor Blakely asked for a motion to adjourn and it was so moved by Councilman Keith Reed and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy.

Motion carries all in favor.

Adjourned: 07:33 pm

Approved:

6-13-22
Date

Preston Blakely
Mayor Preston Blakely

Town of Fletcher
Budget Retreat Meeting
Minutes
May 4, 2022

Call the meeting to order at: 09:34 am

Those who were in attendance are as follows:

Mayor Preston Blakely
Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy
Councilman Trevor Lance
Councilman Keith Reed
Councilwoman Sheila Franklin
Town Manager Mark Biberdorf
Assistant Town Manager Heather Taylor

Overview of Proposed FY 2022-2023 Budget

Balanced budget presented totaling \$8,487,198 in revenues and expenses.

This is a \$465,857 increase from the FY 2021-2022 budget.

Sales tax growth continues to balance out less than the expected growth in the property tax base.

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

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

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

Two additional full time positions recommended in this budget (increases total employees to 40 FTE)

Most increases are for personnel related expenses and equipment.

6% due COLA this year due to Social Security cost of living measure going up.

Only 1.4% increase to stay with existing health insurance plan and 4.9 % increase on dental.

Revenues came in better than expected on the sales tax side helping to bolster general fund.

Funding included for a salary/market study for employee compensation.

Overall Economic Outlook for FY 2022-2023

Projected GDP growth of 3.5% -4%. However, had negative growth in the first quarter of this year.

Inflation to decline to about 3.5% compared to 7% plus rates in recent months.

Expect further interest rates hikes 2022.

NC's economic outlook point toward continued moderate growth in the coming year.

Gross State Product (GSP) for NC projected to grow by 2.6% - 3.3% in 2022.

Manufacturing growth and building permits (mostly housing starts) are the main drivers for the growth.

Local Economic Factors

Residential growth occurring (Sycamore Cottages -151 unit development with Phase 2 well underway; 2 single family home subdivisions on Rutledge Road; BSC holdings for a 311 unit development.

Commercial/Industrial growth continues to be strong-Low Impact Technologies last year, CanvasPrints this year, and site improvements on property adjacent to Blue Ridge Metals for industrial development.

Retail sales expected to be moderate for the state and locally.

Revenue Outlook

Ad Valorem values projected to increase from \$1,383,922,000 to 1,416,605,000.

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 decreased but not all listings processed.

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

2% increase (additional \$81,240) in real and personal property taxes.

10% increase (additional \$28,772) in Motor Vehicle portion property taxes.

15% increase (additional \$2,000) in 2021 Taxes and Prior Years.

25% increase (additional \$500) in Interest on Investments.

3% increase (additional \$21,500) in utilities sales tax.

16% increase (additional \$30,000) in Powell Bill revenues.

16% increase (additional \$298,722) in Local Sales Tax.

6% increase (additional \$5,000) in Recreational Activities.

33% increase (additional 5,000) in Sale of Fixed Assets

4% increase (additional \$10,000) in ABC Distribution.

40% decrease (drop of \$200) in Powell Bill Interest.

3% decrease (drop of \$1,100) in Beer & Wine Tax.

10% decrease (drop of \$5,400) in Cable Franchise.

60% decrease (drop \$3,000) in Concession Stand

25% decrease (drop \$1,000) in Police Revenue.

22% decrease (drop of \$10,939) in Appropriated Fund Balance.

Budget Requests

Budget Requests initially came in \$321,500 above prior year revenues.

Two additional Patrol Officer Positions added within Police Department.

Increase in pay for part-time positions to be more competitive in our market.

Salary/market study update for employee compensation.

Increase in incentives line for Low Impact Technologies/Project Helios payment.

Ongoing monitoring of Town Center agreement with developer.

Slight increase in Planning budget for storm water permit compliance measures.

Tuition reimbursement increased for officers obtaining college degrees.

Additional vehicles and body armor for two new officer patrol positions.

Hardware and system upgrades for IT to improve security and public engagement.

Equipment upgrades to improve efficiency with fleet maintenance with Public Works.

Continue Contracting out concession stand at Bill Moore Community Park.

Polaris gator replaced for Parks & Recreation.

Installation of gateway sign at south entrance to town along Highway 25.

Expense requests funded within current tax rate of 34 cents.

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

Break at: 10:10 am

Back from Break at: 10:17 am

Governing Body

Small increase in overall funding for this department going from \$52,191 to \$ 54,771.

Increase in Salaries line item for 6% COLA going from \$38,011 to \$40,290.

Increase in FICA line from \$3,080 to \$ 3,255

Slight increase in Departmental Supplies from \$1,500 to \$1,700

Contributions line decreased from \$400 to \$300.

Administration

Moderate increase in total departmental appropriations from \$600,301 to \$650,888.

Largest increase is in Salaries from \$419,370 to \$453,350 for COLA and merit pay.

Moderate increase for our fringe benefit line items.

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

Significant decrease in departmental budget from \$343,988 to \$155,719.

This is due to the demolition project being complete and no elections expense.

Small increase in Public Account line from \$16,900 to \$17,000.

Economic Development line increased from \$52,088 to \$55,865 due to incentives with Low Impact Technologies.

Apple Country Transit increased from \$5,000 to \$12,854 for match request from County.

Council had some discussion on the Apple Country transit budget request and some suggestions were made to either go with the fully requested amount or possibly just increase the amount from last year (\$5,000) to \$7,500.

Professional Services

Significant decrease in departmental budget from \$343,988 to \$155,719.

This is due to the demolition project being complete and no elections expense.

Small increase in Public Accountant line from \$16,900 to \$17,000

Economic Development line increase from \$52,088 to \$55,865 due to incentives with Low Impact technologies.

Apple Country Transit increased from \$5,000 to \$12,854 for match request from County.

Planning Department

Slight Increase in total appropriation going from \$186,291 to \$197,841.

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

Postage increased from \$500 to \$600.

Travel & Training increased from \$1,500 to \$2,000 for in-person conferences.

Advertising increase from \$1,000 to \$1,200 for potential increase in public hearings.

Storm water Program increased from \$50,950 to \$52,048.

Town Facilities

A small increase in total departmental appropriations from \$140,580 to \$151,514.

Postage line increased from \$3,300 to \$6,300 due to public engagement survey.

Advertisements line increased from \$2,600 to \$3,600 due to additional job postings

Wellness line increased from \$7,000 to \$7,500 for increase cost of activities.

Contract Services line increased from \$20,500 to \$25,000 for new gateway sign at south entrance to Town.

Police Department

A significant increase in the overall budget going from \$1,664,203 to \$1,981,424.

Most of the expense increase due to 2 new Patrol Officer positions (\$225,509)

Next largest area of expense associated with adjustments to salary and fringe line items with COLA and merit included.

Holiday Pay increased from \$27,160 to \$30,152 due to salary increases and 2 new officers.

Travel & Training increased from \$12,000 to \$14,000 for increase in tuition reimbursement.

Fuels Expense line increases significantly from \$38,000 to \$61,860.

The dues & Subscriptions line decreased from \$3,628 to \$3,000 due to less expense anticipated.

Capital Outlay line increased to \$92,240 for vehicles for two new officers.

Physicals/Drug line increased from \$4,000 to \$5,400 due to additional positions being hired and other vacancies in department.

Uniforms line remains at \$25,500 due to new positions and additional body armor replacements.

IT Department

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

Significant increase in overall departmental budget from \$201,080 to \$282,174.

This is mostly due to capital related projects being in IT's operation budget.

Several decision packages recommended including: Backup System Upgrade, Replacement of Camera Systems for Town Hall and park redundant Next Gen Firewalls, and Council Meeting Archive.

No change in Contract line with One Who Serves (Flat rate billing)

Dues line increases from \$33,940 to \$45,964 for several decision package recommendations.

Subscriptions line increases from \$51,460 to \$57,530 for Debt Book Software.

Capital line increases from \$5,000 to \$68,000 due to previously mentioned improvements.

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 \$1,432,317 to \$1,505,975

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 \$144,792 to \$107,959.

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

Break at: 12:20 pm

Back from Break at: 12:33 pm

Public Works

Small increase in total departmental appropriations from \$1,224,641 to \$ 1,255,897

Purchase of tire balancer, pneumatic air pumps, and OBD scanner for fleet maintenance (\$18,000)

Increase in training costs for CDL License requirement (\$10,000)

Recycling costs increase due to Consumer Price Index provision in contract (\$7,220)

Salaries line sees moderate increase for merit and COLA adjustments from \$384,525 to \$416,935.

Fringe benefit line items increased for merit and COLA adjustments.

Increase in Travel & Training from \$3,500 to \$13,500 for new CDL training requirements.

Increase in M & R US.25 from \$16,000 to \$17,000 for new banner hardware.

Fuel Expense increased from \$25,500 to \$30,000 due to rising fuel prices.

Landfill Charges line increased from \$110,000 to \$113,000 due to volume increases and new households.

Recycling line increasing from \$103,300 to \$110,520 due to CPI factor (5.1%) in contract with curbside Recycling.

Tools & Equipment line increasing from \$10,000 to \$17,000 for update to OBD scanner and upsizing tool box.

Public Works-Powell Bill

Increase in funding for Powell Bill revenues from \$183,000 to \$213,000.

\$213,000 budgeted on the revenue and expense side.

This is primarily used for resurfacing streets.

Parks & Recreation

Slight increase in overall departmental appropriation from \$659,386 to \$713,962.

Increases Part-Time Salary line to cover increases in hourly for part-time employees.

No new full-time positions requested this year.

Replacement of Polaris Gator is the only capital request recommended at \$14,000.

Salary & fringe lines increased for COLA and merit adjustments.

Part-time Salary increased from \$81,000 to \$94,048 due to increases in hourly wage for part-time employees.

Increase in postage line from \$200 to \$400 for direct mailing events.

Utilities line increased from \$31,000 to \$32,000 due to increase in utility costs.

Fuel Expenses increased from \$7,000 to \$8,100 due to increase in fuel prices.

Golf Tournament expense increased from \$4,000 to \$5,000 due to higher green fees.

Concession line zeroed out due to contracting out operation to Baabal's Ice cream.

Capital Outlay line increased from \$7,000 to \$14,000 for purchase of Polaris Gator.

Capital Improvement Budget with CIP

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

\$.085 generates \$1,192,074 in revenue for FY 2022-2023.

\$.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 tax levy available for debt service supported projects will be

\$911,586.

Amount of tax levy available for new projects without debt will be \$280,488.

CIP – Debt Service

- 1) Town Hall Improvements Project; 2) Highway 25 Land Acquisition; and 3) Garbage Truck.

Debt service for the Town Hall project be \$549,130.

Debt service for HWY. 25 Land Acquisition project will be \$168,900.

Debt Service for the Garbage Truck will be \$102,733

Surplus debt service available is \$87,811.

Recommend payment to principal on debt with surplus debt service funds.

Discussion Followed: on suggestions of what to do with the additional funds of \$87,811.

Suggestions were made to pay down on current debt or the possibility of adding tennis and/or basketball courts to Bill Moore Community Park.

Council would like to pursue adding Tennis/Basket Ball courts to Bill Moore Community Park.

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

Police Vehicles (3) Patrol Cars - \$127,500

Public Works Heavy Duty Pick-Up Trucks (2) - \$115,000.

Kate's & Pete's Park Resurfacing of Walking Trail - \$41,000.

There was no surplus of non-debt service available after updating estimated costs for these projects.

Discussion Followed:

Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Davy made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Councilman Keith Reed.

Motion carries all in favor.

Adjourned: 1:26 pm

Approved:

6-13-22
Date

Preston Blakely
Mayor Preston Blakely