



**TOWN OF GRANITE QUARRY  
TOWN COUNCIL  
BUDGET WORKSHOP  
MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, May 21, 2024, 4:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Mayor Brittany Barnhardt, Mayor Pro Tem Doug Shelton, Council Member John Linker, Council Member Laurie Mack, Council Member Rich Luhrs

**Staff:** Interim Town Manager/Fire Chief/Public Works Director Jason Hord, Town Clerk Aubrey Smith, Finance Officer Shelly Shockley

**Call to Order:** Mayor Barnhardt called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**1. Discussion**

**Budget FY 24-25**

Interim Town Manager Hord presented the Council with the updated FY2024-2025 budget projections and requests on the PowerPoint presentation last viewed at the April 22, 2024 budget workshop (*that will be included in the minute book*). The discussion on each slide is as follows:

- **Slide 3 – 2023/24 Estimated End of Year** - dropped slightly
- **Slide 4 – Revenues Projection** - no change
- **Slide 5 – Large Projects**
  - Includes the PARTF Grant Match (if awarded); if not awarded match contribution can be removed
  - Includes Fire Truck \$1,075,700
  - Added \$205,000 for capital reserve
  - Street Paving and Sidewalks \$215,000 (funded through Powell Bill)
- **Slide 6 – Firetruck** - Confirmed with two potential lenders that one payment could be made the first fiscal year and two payments per year beginning the following fiscal year.
- **Slide 7 – Governing Body, Contingency & Transfers**
  - No pay increase proposed but extra added for training
  - Council Member Mack requested additional funding for training to cover hotel stays. After discussion, it was decided the line will remain at \$4,000 with the option to make budget amendments as needed when travel or training requests are brought before the Council.
- **Slide 8 – Administration**
  - Pay and classification adjustments were reflected for some individuals.
  - An increase in insurance was reflected on the slide.
- **Slide 9 – Police**
  - Liability and workers compensation increases were reflected.
  - The capital outlay reflects the purchase of a police car.
  - The Verkada camera system request was removed from the budget after the initial demo of the system.

- Faith's contribution amount is shown at 16% or \$175,797. There was discussion regarding the best way to calculate the resources dedicated to Faith versus Granite Quarry and how to best calculate a fair contribution for services provided.
- **Slide 10 – Fire** - Amounts shown reflect three new full-time firefighters and financing for a new fire engine.
- **Slide 11 – Public Works** - Amounts shown include reclassification of Public Works Crew Leader to Assistant Public Works Director, increased budget for part-time personnel, and the purchase of a new dump truck.
- **Slide 12 – Powell Bill Streets** - Manager Hord shared the system used to rate streets for improvement priority on an annual basis. The estimated cost for some of the streets was shown as an illustration. The cost for FY24/25 street paving projects would total \$215,000.
- **Slide 14 – Parks** - no changes. The CAC budget is \$1,000.
- **Slide 15 – Where We Stand** - this slide illustrated the breakdown for different options including no increase in the current tax rate, a .01 increase, .02 increase, and a .03 increase. All options include a \$13.00 environmental fee.
- **Slide 16 – Rowan County Municipalities** - showed potential tax rate increases for other Rowan County Municipalities
- **Slide 17 – We Hear You!** - Manager Hord shared that the desires of individual council members have been heard and he encouraged the development of a capital improvement plan. The plan will also help with grant applications.
- **Slide 18 – Discussion & Next Steps** - Manager Hord asked for Council feedback on:
  1. Tax Rate
  2. Capital Outlay Items
  3. Capital Reserve Lines
  4. Street Paving

Council members asked technical questions for clarification on specific budget items including the reason for changes to the amounts of the Salisbury water and sewer payment and the employee appreciation banquet. There was discussion regarding the handout for idle hours of police vehicles (*that will be included in the minute book*). The Council would like clarification on the computations shown on the sheet. There was discussion of specific items on the Schedule of Fees and some of the reasoning behind the amounts. The amounts were recommended as best practice by the town's planning consultant to cover planning costs but can be amended by the Council.

**ACTION:** Mayor Pro Tem Shelton made a motion for a five-minute recess. Council Member Mack seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

***The Council recessed at 5:14 p.m.***

***Mayor Barnhardt called the meeting back into session at 5:20 p.m.***

The Council discussed street paving and sidewalk improvements and options for the capital reserve fund.

Council Member Luhrs questioned the need for a police car and stated he felt raising taxes was a move in the wrong direction. He suggested finding creative ways to fund projects and being proactive with the business community. He proposed no tax increase.

Mayor Pro Tem Shelton stated he couldn't support a tax increase this year. He stated a desire to remove the police car and \$205,000 for capital reserve and to place the balance in the contingency fund.

Council Member Linker stated he started out against a tax increase but wouldn't want to remove anything from the budget. He stated he could be in support of an increase of up to two cents.

Council Member Mack stated she viewed the increase as more of a want than a need but was in support of growing Granite Quarry. She echoed support for seeking more commercial properties and projects. She stated she was not in favor of a tax increase.

Council Member Linker shared that any industrial tenants on Chamandy would require a water and sewer obligation from the town as well as rebates of taxes for the first five years.

Mayor Barnhardt stated that remaining revenue neutral (no tax rate increase) would cripple staff and that if the Council proposed taking out capital outlay, a loan should be added back in.

Mayor Pro Tem Shelton stated the Council was allowing for salary increases for some staff and a possible 8% increase across the board. He proposed that the question be called.

**ACTION:** Mayor Pro Tem Shelton made a motion to hold the tax rate at .44, take out the \$205,000 for capital reserve, and remove the police car with any surplus balance be placed in Board Contingency. Council Member Luhrs seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-1 with Mayor Pro Tem Shelton, Council Member Luhrs, and Council Member Mack in favor and Council Member Linker opposed.

Discussion on the motion included clarification on the cuts that were being requested and what exactly the vote was on.

### **Adjourn**

**ACTION:** Mayor Barnhardt called for a motion to adjourn and closed the meeting at 5:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Aubrey Smith*

Town Clerk