

Town of Oriental
Town Board Budget Workshop
Continued from May 13 , 2014

May 21, 2014

Continuing the May 13, 2014 Budget Meeting, the Board met on Wednesday, May 21, 2014 at 4:00 pm at the Oriental Town Hall.

Present were: Mayor Pro-Tem Venturi, Commissioners Overcash, Winfrey, White, and Summers.
Manager Miller and Recording Secretary Tammy Cox.
Three members of the public and media.

Absent: Mayor Bill Sage

Manager Miller distributed a new budget proposal outlining not only the original budget presented at the May 13th meeting but one that included several options showing possible revenue generated by property tax increases ranging from 1/2 cent to a 2 cent increase as well as cutting expenses by \$20,000.00.

Each Commissioner shared their views of possible solutions to either increase revenue and/or reduce expenditures.

Commissioner White began by suggesting that should a property tax increase be implemented, that all expenses be carefully reviewed to determine true need. He pointed out that personnel costs make up a large portion of the budget and suggested that expenses could be cut by eliminating one or more of the following: a new public works employee, part-time employees, a new gator, a new police car, move annual retreat to town hall, or the storage shed rehab. project to name a few. He also suggested the town consider adding a charge to the monthly recycling collection to increase revenue.

Commissioner Winfrey was in agreement that careful consideration of the expenses planned be made in order to determine what was really necessary this upcoming fiscal year. He also felt that it was important to have appropriate staff available.

Commissioner Summers distributed a handout, a copy of which is attached to these minutes, outlining some of his concerns and suggestions for the upcoming fiscal year. While realizing the Board's need for conservative projections in the 2014-2015 fiscal year's revenue, he suggested that should additional revenue beyond those projected materialize that it be applied to projects not slated or cut from the upcoming fiscal year due to budget restraints. He asked that monies promised by Wal-Mart to the town in lieu of taxes be added to the upcoming budget. NOTE: *Wal-Mart is not within the corporate limits and therefore is not subject to property taxes. This*

donation is a goodwill gesture on their part. He also commended Manager Miller in her efforts to minimize overtime since taking the manager position.

Commissioner Overcash recognized the cost of personnel but felt that it was important to maintain an adequate staff capable of providing services promised to the Oriental citizens. It was noted that staff was needed to maintain public restrooms, streets, right-of-ways, parks, docks, and other public areas within the town as well as projects planned for the future. He was in agreement with the proposal of adding a small charge on recycling services, as well as including a \$2,000 donation from Wal-Mart to the projected revenue.

Commissioner Venturi cautioned that the projection for legal expenses for South Ave. Litigation might be higher than anticipated. She also discussed possible ramifications of assessing a fee on recycling. She stated that should property taxes be raised to rebuild fund balance, thus providing a cushion for unforeseen emergencies, that expenses be reviewed to ensure that the town identify smarter spending options. She also felt that it was important to create a line item for overtime as it was unlikely that we could avoid it entirely.

It was agreed to increase the revenue as follows: Wal-Mart donation in the amount of \$2,000 and \$8,400 representing a one dollar monthly charge to each customer for recycling. Having identified additional sources of income without a property tax increase, Manager Miller was asked to review the General Fund Budget and be prepared to present a balanced budget for the next budget workshop as well as plan for overtime caused by emergencies and leaks.

Bill Hines asked the status of the Pump Out Station Grant. He was informed that grant had not yet been submitted but would receive the current update in the next few days.

Manager Miller reminded those present that a reception for Public Works Director, Jason Collett, would precede the next Agenda Meeting and would begin at 4:00 PM. Mr. Collett would be relocating to Georgia mid-June 2014.

With no further business the meeting was recessed until Friday, May 23, 2014 at 9:00 AM.

Barbara Venturi, Mayor Pro-Tem

Diane Miller, Town Manager