

**MAY 6, 2019**

A budget workshop was held at the M.S. Bailey Center at 5:00 PM with Mayor Bob Mclean presiding with Councilmembers Cook, Jenkins, Kuykendall, Neal, Roth, and Walsh. The City Manager was present. Local news media present was Randy Stevens from WLBG. Notice was emailed to all local news media on May 2, 2019.

**INVOCATION**                    The invocation was given by Councilmember Gary Kuykendall.

**PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE**        Mayor McLean asked Council and the audience to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**BUDGET FY 2019-20** Mayor Mclean recognized Mr. Bill Cannon, City Manager. Mr. Cannon stated that the only major change to the budget is the Laurens County Fire contract funds and how that affects the Fire Department. Mr. Cannon recognized Ms. Morrow, Finance Director, to go over the changes. Councilmember Roth asked how would a positive amount from the Fire Contract affect the budget and Ms. Morrow stated that the City would do a budget amendment to reflect the change. Councilmember Jenkins asked if the budget before Council was a balanced budget and Ms. Morrow stated yes. Ms. Morrow stated that the City's Strategic Plan is to provide Exceptional Infrastructure, Grow the Economy, Develop and Maintain Sustainable Revenue Sources, Provide for a First Class City for our Residents, and Promote Community Development. Ms. Morrow stated that the two primary Funds are the General Fund and the Utility Fund. Ms. Morrow stated that the General Fund budget is \$6,880,716 and the budget for the Utility Fund is \$23,957,713 with a total budget of \$30,838,429. Ms. Morrow stated that the overall change to the budget since the last budget workshop on April 9, 2019 is a \$133,126 decrease in the General Fund and an \$18,010 decrease in the Utility Fund. Ms. Morrow stated that the total net decrease is \$151,136 which is a .5% overall decrease to the budget. Ms. Morrow stated that the proposed budget reflects the funds the City received from Laurens County last year not the requested additional funds. Ms. Morrow stated that the City increased the tax millage rate which increased the Property Revenues by \$18,000 and reduced the Laurens County Fire Contract from \$450,000 to \$293,069. Ms. Morrow stated that the Fire Contract reduction is reflected in the Fire Department by reducing the number of employees from seventeen to thirteen which lowered the Salaries and Wages Expense by \$150,194, lowering the Vehicle Repair Expenses by \$1,707, and lowering the Depreciation Fund payback by \$3,750. Ms. Morrow stated that the City set up a Depreciation Fund in order for each department to pay back the cost of purchasing their equipment and vehicles.

(Page 2)

Ms. Morrow stated that the City then uses these funds to purchase equipment and vehicles according to the City's Capital Plan. Councilmember Roth asked if the Departments write a check to this fund and Ms. Morrow stated yes. Councilmember Roth asked what is the fund used for and Ms. Morrow stated for the departments to purchase equipment and vehicles. Ms. Morrow stated that the fund is used like a savings account in order for the City to get away from purchasing equipment and vehicles through Lease Purchase Agreements from a bank. Councilmember Roth asked if the Police Department purchased a vehicle how long would the vehicle stay in use and Ms. Morrow stated the Police Department would rotate that vehicle out after seven years. Ms. Morrow stated that the Utility Fund did not have any notable changes and the proposed budget has a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment. Councilmember Roth asked if the City increases the City's Reserve Funds and Ms. Morrow stated yes. Ms. Morrow stated that the City increases the Reserve Funds on a monthly basis. Councilmember Cook questioned the wording regarding the Parks and Ms. Morrow stated that the goals and achievements have not been updated in the proposed budget but would be before final reading. Councilmember Cook asked if the City had any updates on the Laurens County Transfer Station and if the new Transfer Station would affect the proposed budget. Mr. Cannon stated that Laurens County is in the process of constructing the new Transfer Station and it would not affect the proposed budget. Mr. Cannon stated that operational costs are included in the proposed budget. Mr. Cannon stated that since the new garbage truck cannot pick up carts in Lydia Mill because of the cars the Public Works Director is going to change routes so the old garbage truck would pick up Lydia Mill carts and the carts of citizens who are not physically able to roll their carts to the street on a Friday. Councilmember Roth asked if the City receives \$500,000 in Hospitality Funds. Ms. Morrow stated that the City receives \$500,000 in Local Hospitality and Accommodations Tax Funds. Councilmember Roth asked if any of those funds could be used for parks and recreation projects and Mr. Cannon stated yes. Councilmember Roth asked if the City has to spend these funds within a certain period and Mr. Cannon stated no. Ms. Morrow stated that the Accommodation Tax funds the City receives from the State has to be spent within a certain time but the local Hospitality and Accommodations Tax Funds do not. Councilmember Jenkins asked if the City was still updating the parks on a rotating basis. Mr. Cannon stated that the City had a report done on each of the City's parks and what was needed to maintain and upgrade the parks. Mr. Cannon stated that the City would use this study to move forward with upgrading the City's parks.

(Page 3)

Councilmember Jenkins asked if the City has found a solution to the parking at the Lydia Mill Park. Mr. Meadors, Public Works Director, stated that the City is looking into finding a solution to the parking problem. Councilmember Cook asked if City parks close at dark and Mr. Meadors stated yes. Mr. Meadors stated that the City has signs at each park regarding the time. Councilmember Jenkins stated that the City may need to patrol the parks more often. Councilmember Cook asked if funds are in the proposed budget to upgrade the Police and Fire Departments and Ms. Morrow stated yes. Ms. Morrow stated that the proposed budget includes a loan payment if the City decides to take out a bond for the upgrades. Councilmember Jenkins asked if the City had any additional information regarding Rosemont Cemetery. Mr. Cannon stated that the City offered the cemetery along with twenty acres of land but no one was interested in taking over the Rosemont Cemetery. Mr. Meadors stated that the City contracts the cemetery maintenance. Mayor McLean asked if the City is selling the graves for \$300 and the City Clerk stated that City sells graves for \$400 to citizens who live in the City. Councilmember Wash asked if the City promoted solar expansion. Mr. Meadors stated that the City currently has six residential solar customers. Mr. Meadors stated that the City encourages customers to go solar but the customer does all of the upgrades for solar power. Councilmember Walsh stated that she would like to see the City encourage more solar expansion. Ms. Morrow stated that the goals and achievements in the proposed budget would be updated before the second reading and the City would place the proposed budget on the City's website. Councilmember Cook asked which budget carried the Community Grants and Ms. Morrow stated the Mayor and Council budget. Councilmember Neal asked when the City would have the final amount of the Laurens County Fire Contract and Ms. Morrow stated that Laurens County meets on May 14<sup>th</sup> to make that decision. Ms. Morrow stated that City staff could change the Fire Contract figures before the final reading and send that information out to Council but if City staff has to make changes to the budget after July then the changes would have to come before Council.

**COUNCILMEMBER  
REPORT**

Councilmember Roth thanked the City staff for their hard work on the proposed budget.

**ADJOURN**

With there being no further business before Council motion was made by Councilmember Cook to adjourn and seconded by Councilmember Neal. The vote was unanimous.

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CITY CLERK

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**MAYOR**