

TOWN OF RICHLANDS
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

The Richlands Town Council held a “Special Called Meeting” on Tuesday, April 23, 2024, at 6:00 pm in the Richlands Council Chambers with the following present:

Mayor: Rod. D. Cury
Town Manager: Jason May
Council Members: Gary Jackson, Rick Wood, Jordan Bales, Jan White, and Laura Mollo
Town Attorney: Mike Thomas
Finance Manager: Ronnie Campbell
Office Manager: Susan Whitt
Town Clerk: Amanda Beheler

Absent: Seth White

The Town Meeting was called to order at 6:00pm and opened with the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Cury.

IN RE: Additions, Deletions, or Corrections to the Agenda

Upon a motion by Jan White seconded by Laura Mollo and the unanimous roll call vote of all members present, the Council voted to approve the agenda.

IN RE: Budget Work Session

Mr. May:

- Pg. 47- Under the Town Manager Salary there is an inclusion of a COLA, that should be removed, and the amount adjusted back to 150k. The extra \$15k will move from that line item and placed under the Public Works line to be able to purchase a plow and spreader.
- Regional Rate Comparison- Gave a brief overview of handout. Lower than everyone but Lebanon.
- Cost of Living Adjustment Handout- Brief overview. Going over a merit increase with HR at this time. Would like to get back to COLA with Merit Increases.
- Tazewell County Public Service Authority Proposed Rate Schedule Handout- went over this with the Council.

Questions:

Mrs. Mollo- Does the Garbage Collection include the increase already? Mr. May advised it was.

Mrs. White- Pg. 85- Asked for clarification on the Water Quality Testing increase. Mr. May advised the 16k is what has been budgeted in the past, going into a water upgrade the Town will need for testing. This amount will be dropped in the next budget if it's still at 5k.

Mrs. White- Pg. 33- Concession Collection- Goes from 19148 to 25000, what has made those changes? Mr. May explained that in 2022 almost 19k this year on pace to get 24k. This is based on historical averages and work that Anthony is doing on the concession stand.

Mrs. White- Pg. 33 #41500- goes down to 2500, what made those changes? Mr. May explained we're on pace to be 5500 this year. Mr. May advised he is generally more conservative on revenue.

Mr. Wood- Swimming Pool Fees- asked if the 15k, 13.7k, etc. are actual numbers? Mr. May advised those are actual numbers. Mr. May also stated the Town will have a new pool at the end of this budget year in June 2025, and expects it to bring in more revenue.

Mr. Bales- What is the average family size? Mr. May advised it is 4 members.

Mr. Wood- How much are the water rates raising? Mr. May advised it will raise \$1 per 1000 gallon. Sewer raises by .25 cents. Mr. Wood stated that he is concerned about another raise so

soon after the last sewer raise. Mr. May explained inflation and explained debt service in 3 years. The Town needs to have good financial numbers for the upcoming projects.

Mrs. Mollo advised she would like it to increase by a quarter each year than all at once in the future.

Mr. May advised the Town provides a once-a-year break if you fill your pool and willing to give a reduction on bills in September for pool water usage.

Mrs. White. Pg. 80- Was the \$1,600 carried over from the past? Mr. May said it was a carryover number due to the uncertainty of the future of Teen Venture. Rick advised that was a one-time deal. Mr. May stated he will move to plow and spreader.

Mr. Jackson stated he would like to see what can be done about the numbers on the sewer. Mr. May advised he would.

Mr. Jackson asked if the Town has to increase the water? Mr. May advised it was due to the loans etc. spread over a 5-year period.

Mayor Cury- Pg. 80- #525160- Coal Miner Memorial- Mayor Cury advised that when installed there was 50k given for maintenance by Jean Harold. Mr. Campbell advised it was coming from a restricted fund.

Mrs. White- Did the employee health insurance stay the same? Mr. May advised it did and that VRS did have a small increase. Mr. May also stated the Town needs to increase its VRS contribution to get to a 70% funded level.

Mr. Wood asked what the total would be for the 5% raise for employees. Mr. May advised it was around \$150k. Mr. Wood would like to mimic the state. Mr. May advised the Town needs to catch up due to little to no increases in the past. Mr. Bales would like to set it and forget it going forward.

Mrs. White- What is the Towns water and sewer tap fees? Mr. May advised he will pull that information, they need to be adjusted accordingly, did not have time in this budget. Mr. Wood does not want to raise tap fees. Mrs. White and Mr. Bales does not either.

Mr. May advised Council that Staff is looking into fees at this time.

The Council further discussed fees.

Mr. Wood advised the Town needs three new meters with electric upgrade. Mr. May advised the receivers will be responsible for buying those.

Mr. Jackson Pg 31- Revenue Summary- What is other revenue? Mr. Campbell advised it was VDOT, sales taxes, Grants etc.

Mrs. Mollo asked if it includes AARRPA? Mr. Campbell advised AARRPA has become the unrestricted fund balance.

Mr. Wood asked if the bridge at Lake Park in this year's budget, Mr. May advised it is in this years budget.

Mr. Wood inquired about Real Estate Taxes, Mr. May advised those are lowering to nineteen cents.

Mr. Wood asked if the Town gave any bonuses. Mr. May advised there was only a small Christmas Bonus that is given to employees.

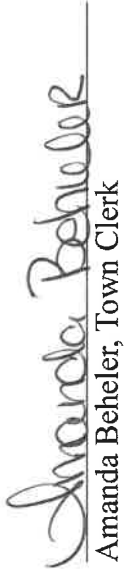
Mr. Wood asked how much money we receive from VDOT for paving, Mr. May advised the Town gets 1.3 million.

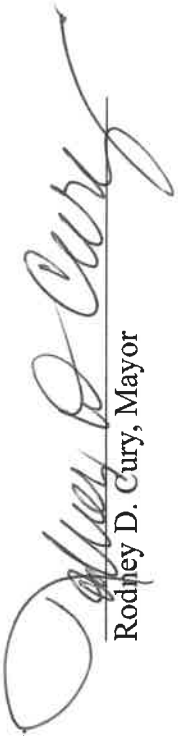
The Council had a discussion on paving.

No further questions from Council regarding the budget at this time.

IN RE: Adjournment

Upon a motion by Rick Wood seconded by Laura Mollo and the unanimous roll call vote of all members present, the meeting was adjourned.


Amanda Beheler, Town Clerk


Rodney D. Cury, Mayor

