

MINUTES OF  
PUBLIC HEARING  
CITY HALL - ZOOM  
JUNE 22, 2020 - 5:30 P.M.

PRESENT

MAYOR

TODD M. HARRELSON

COUNCIL

JOAN S. GAUSE  
LEWIS C. HARDEE JR.  
TERRENCE T. HARDEE  
CARROLL D. PADGETT, JR.  
MICHAEL E. SUGGS  
JAN P. VESCOVI

NEWS MEDIA present via ZOOM were Mrs. Jen Boyd Causey, writer for Tabor-Loris Tribune, Ms. Annie Rigby, writer for The Loris Times, and Mr. Scott Harper writer for The Loris Scene.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Harrelson.

**INVOCATION:**

The invocation was given by Councilman Terrence Hardee.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Harrelson.

**ROLL CALL:**

The roll was called by Amanda Causey.

**BUSINESS:**

**A. PUBLIC HEARING FOR A BUDGET PRESENTATION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2020, ENDING JUNE 30, 2021**

Administrator Drozdak gave a budget summary presentation on the 2020-2021 General Fund and the Water Sewer Fund Budget.

Councilwoman Gause requested clarification as to the location of the debt associated with the Public Safety Building. Mr. Drozdak advised that that was not yet reflected in the budget proposal.

Councilman Padgett requested clarification of the property tax amounts because it appears that the Homestead Tax was accounted for twice. Also asked for confirmation of the amount for the Local Government Aid. Administrator Drozdak advised that the State Assembly increased the amount this year from \$38,000 to \$43,000.

Councilman Suggs advised that the Inventory Exemption Tax was incorrect and should be \$30,401. Also advised that the Election Filing Fees should be removed.

Councilman Padgett asked if the recommended raises were included in the budget.

Mr. Drozdak advised that those raises created a budget deficit.

Councilman Suggs requested clarification and correction of the PARD Grants. Mr. Brandon Harrelson advised that there were two PARD Grants totaling \$20,000.

Councilman Suggs that legally restricted funds should be in a special revenue account and should be reflected in the budget as such.

Councilman Suggs advised that the Sanitation Department needs corrections made to the expenditure associated with fuel as it currently reflects \$0.

Councilman Suggs also requested recalculation of the SC Retirement and FICA amounts in the Administration, Recreation, and Sanitation Department Budgets.

Councilman Suggs advised that the expense line associated with training in the council budget appears to be low. Mayor Harrelson advised that training expense was minimal due to most meetings being held virtually in response to the COVID pandemic.

Councilman Suggs requested clarification of the cell phone expenditure listed in the council section of the budget.

Councilman Suggs advised the portion of the Police Budget pertaining to the SC Retirement contributions should be recalculated for confirmation of accuracy.

Councilwoman Vescovi questioned where the expenditure associated with the administrator's salary was listed. Mr. Drozdak advised that the budget could not be balanced with the associated salary.

Mr. Drozdak advised that the administrator was replaced with an accountant.

Councilman Padgett advised that there was no way to balance the budget with the suggested pay increases. Advised that raises would need to be addressed in the future.

Councilman Suggs advised that after 4 years of financial freefall modifications would need to be made to balance the budget and salary increases would need to be addressed later.

Mr. Brandon Harrelson asked if the pay increase was specifically for General Fund, or did it apply to Water & Sewer as well.

Councilman Padgett advised that it would be both funds.

Mr. Brandon Harrelson advised that efforts needed to be made to protect the employees and provide something to the employees so that they understand they are appreciated. He stated that he, as the department head, is speaking on behalf of the employees and he feels that they are paying for sins of the past.

Mayor Harrelson agreed and confirmed that council would be reviewing the financial situation and would work to take measures to put pay increases in place to become effective later.

Attorney Moss advised that one option would be to research the options surrounding creating a franchise fee.

Councilwoman Vescovi requested a breakdown of the City's expense associated with employee benefits. Administrator Drozdak advised that he would provide the information to council prior to the next meeting.

The advertisement for this hearing was published in the Loris Times, in the June 4, 2020, edition of the Classified section on page 5A and The Sun News, in the June 8, 2020, edition in the Classified section.

**PUBLIC AND PRESS COMENTS:**

1. Mr. Scott Harper writer for The Loris Scene, asked why the administrator position was removed from the budget. Mr. Drozdak advised that an administrator could not be afforded at this time.

Mr. Harper asked if Mr. Drozdak would stay on after June 30, 2020. Mr. Drozdak advised that was unknown at this time. Councilwoman Vescovi advised that money was allocated in the budget for services that may be needed.

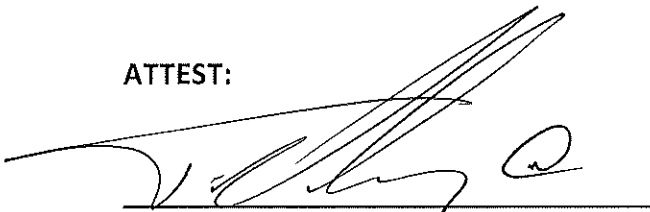
Mr. Harper asked how the budget could be passed when the amount associated with the Public Safety Building was not known. Mayor Harrelson advised that the budget was not yet passed, that Mr. Drozdak omitted the number by mistake, and it would be added.

Mr. Harper asked if COVID was being used to keep the public out of the meetings. Mayor Harrelson advised that the meetings were accessible via ZOOM and with Loris currently a hot spot for COVID, the closed meetings were for the safety of the public and staff.

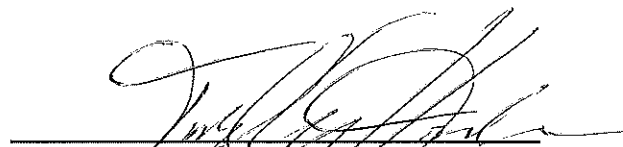
**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by Councilman Lewis Hardee, seconded by Councilwoman Gause to adjourn. All Members voted favorably. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:31 PM.

ATTEST:



TODD KEITH MASSEY II  
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF



TODD M. HARRELSON  
MAYOR

LORIS COUNCIL MEMBERS

Joan S. Gause  
JOAN S. GAUSE

Lewis C. Hardee Jr.  
LEWIS C. HARDEE JR.

Terrence Hardee  
TERRENCE HARDEE

Carroll D. Padgett Jr.  
CARROLL D. PADGETT JR.

Michael E. Suggs  
MICHAEL E. SUGGS

Jan P. Vesconi  
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