

Mayor and Council of Smithsburg, MD
Work Session Minutes
Tuesday, April 23, 2019

The Mayor and Council of Smithsburg, MD held a Work Session meeting at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, April 23, 2019 in the Town Hall Council Chambers. In attendance were Council Members Dennis Wenthe, Richard Hetherington, Donald Souders, Cassandra Weaver and Niel Smith. Mayor Kesselring was absent. Also in attendance was Town Manager Debra Smith and Clerk/Treasurer Justine Keadle.

Antietam Cable Franchise Agreement Expiration/Renewal-Town Attorney Jennifer Keefer reviewed the agreement and recommended we have the agreement the Town Manager look into the fee percentage of revenue for the town before committing to the current 3% . After verifying with Antietam Cable Representative Brian Lynch, Town Manager Smith stated that he quoted renewals with other municipalities now at 5%. Council Member Weaver inquired about concerns she received from citizens regarding Antietam Cables situation with WDVM. Council Member Souders stated that we do not have any leverage in the matter between Antietam Cable and WDVM but citizens can come to the next meeting to express any concerns and ask questions of the representative. Council Member Souders also thanked Town Manager Debra Smith for reaching out to the attorney and the recommendation of the increase to 5%.

FY19 Proposed Road Repairs-Town Manager Debra Smith presented a list of potholes proposed for repair compiled by Public Works to Council. If the cost of the work is under \$10,000 she will reach out to Huntzberry Brothers being that they were the low bidders in last years bid. If the work is going to be over \$10,000 it will have to be put out to bid. In the listing of repairs was also roads repairs too big to be considered "routine" which includes E. School Lane, E. Bishop Lane, W. Fire Co. Lane and E. Henrietta Street. These areas are considered major in nature and Town Manager Smith proposed the following; the town currently has a \$71,000 HUR capital grant that can be carried over to FY20, the HUR funds proposed for FY20 are estimated at \$132,000.00 for an estimated \$203,000.00 that can be utilized in FY20. If the town does not receive the \$100,000.00 ARC grant to reconstruct E. School Lane, the HUR funding can be used and the remainder used towards tar and chipping the remaining areas.

Council Member Hetherington stated that we need to get E. School Lane and also inquired if any of the work needed done on Bishop Lane or Maple Ave would be done during the repairs from the water transmission line project. Debra Smith state that the work has already been done on Bishop Lane and Maple Ave by the contractor from the transmission line project and we will need to do the repairs. Council Member Hetherington stated July 1st would be a good time to start the work as school will be out. Also, that the stadium upgrade will include the repairing of the bridge and the paving of road by the stadium. Consensus of Council to move to the Mayor and Council meeting agenda.

Draft Review of the FY20 Water Fund Budget-This year is the third and final year of the rate increase of \$5 per the 6,000 gallon minimum rate and \$1 per 1,000 gallon rate per MDE's requirements. There will also be a 3% increase that will be passed on due to the increase from the City of Hagerstown which will be added for the next 5-years. Proposed water rates for FY20 will go from \$49.83 to \$56.47 for the first 6,000 gallons and the per 1,000 gallon rate will increase from \$5.62 to \$6.82. Out of town water rates will be 1.5 times the inside rate. Total revenue would be \$667,000 and total expenses would be \$464,820. This would leave the town with a surplus of \$202,180. Town Manager Smith would like to see a new account opened to segregate the funds received from the debt service for the MDE loan.

Draft Review of the FY20 Sewer Fund Budget-The County is not proposing a sewer increase at this time however, the final decision will not be known until the County Commissioners May meeting and we may need to adjust the sewer rate at that time. At this time the Town Manager is not proposing any additional increase in the sewer rates.

Total revenue would be \$693,000 with total expense of \$690,100. The largest expense item is the sewer treatment fee paid to Washington County. The \$560,000.00 budgeted in FY19 has been exceeded by \$70,000 to date with four-(4) months remaining in the fiscal year. The FY20 amount has been increased by \$40,000 to \$600,000.00. In addition, \$40,000 is budgeted in sewer capital outlay to make repairs to help resolve the towns I & I problems. This would leave the town with a surplus of \$2,900.

Council Member Souders inquired about the pump issues the town has been having. Town Manager Debra Smith stated that the town continues to have issues at both the Chips Station and the high school pump station with debris locking up the pumps causing a crane have to come onsite to pull the pumps to make the repairs.

The debris appears to be mop heads or shredded towels and a great deal of feminine products. Looking into the installation of a barscreen or “catch-method” to contain the debris prior to getting to the pumps is going to be difficult as it has been determined that the age of the pump stations and the design of the manholes will have to be re-designed in order to correct the problem. Meanwhile, the Public Works has manufactured a catch method as well as continuing to educate the public on not flushing any foreign items.

Council Member Weaver stated that we need to have further discussion on the yard waste and sanitation fees. Town Manager Debra Smith recommended the elimination of yard waste and have the town absorb the cost of the spring and fall bulk pickup to lower the cost of the new contract. Council Member Souders stated we could phase out the yard waste at year three or four of the contract. He also stated that the town has not passed on any additional cost to the citizens over the years maintaining a \$10 per quarter rate and the town’s cost has increased each year. Council Member Weaver inquired if anyone had received any contacts outside of social media regarding the sanitation rates and that is something Council needs to consider when they go into further discussions.

Further discussion was held regarding items in the swales. Council Member Souders stated that he was in a neighborhood in Hagerstown and that there were no hoops or other items in the streets or in the cul-de-sacs. Council Member Smith stated that it does not only include hoops but all items. Debra Smith is going to reach out to the town’s attorney to create or modify the current ordinance language. Council Member Souders stated that this could possibly be changed to a nuisance issue.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Justine Keadle, Clerk/Treasurer