

MINUTES

The City of Blountstown, County of Calhoun, State of Florida, met in a Budget Workshop Tuesday, August 29, 2023, immediately following the Special Meeting at 5:01 P.M. at the City Council Meeting Room. The following members of the City Council present were: Mayor Tony Shoemake, Councilman Bill Gaskin, Councilman Clifford Jackson, Councilwoman Mert Stephens and Councilwoman Sheila Blackburn.

Also present were: City Manager Traci S. Hall, Police Chief Mark Mallory, Public Works Director Phillip Griffin, and Fire Chief Ben Hall.

Also present were: Mike Ward, Jerrod Waldron, Mike Blackburn, and Sol Blount.

Mayor Shoemake called the Budget Workshop to order at 5:03 P.M following the Special Meeting. The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were said prior in Special Meeting.

Mrs. Hall began with Budget Draft #1 by reviewing Capital Outlay and starting with the Admin Department. The 2 computers, set up, and hardware (carryover) for \$4,500. She stated that a server, backup system for Microsoft 365, software, license, and labor is estimated \$25,000 and will be added to Admin Department. Contractual services will be added for \$10,000 for monthly monitoring of system and remediation if needed.

For the Parks Greenway Department. Paint train and repair rail bed (carryover)\$145,000. Mayor Shoemake stated that the train railbed will be fixed underneath, then next year it will be painted. There were changes to reduce the line item to \$72,500. Magnolia Square camera equipment and labor for \$5,500. Magnolia Square sound system (carryover) for \$4,500. Replace the roof of Gazebo (carryover) for \$5,000. Bore and run conduit for underground electric at Magnolia Square for \$ 5,000.

For the Street Department, mowers for \$11,000, weed eaters for \$5,000, chain saws for \$4,500, cut off saw for \$ 1,200, and work truck (future purchase) \$15,000 from reserves.

For the Electric Department, small bucket truck – purchase in 5 years-budget \$20K each year (carryover \$40K) for current total of \$60,000, trip savers (new CLH upgrade) for \$15,700.

For the Gas Department, Charlie Johns St. bridge gas line bore (carryover \$14,100) for \$19,100, Vivax-Metrotech locator RTK- Pro for \$9,165, and the catholic protection deep well replacement for \$40,000.

For the Sewer Department, new 4X4 truck for \$50,000, UV critical spares for \$14,000, 4” portable bypass pump for lift stations at \$ 60,000, fence blinds for lift station #1 and #7 for \$5,000, and new sewer camera system for \$10,840.

For the Police Department, 3 patrol vehicles with equipment and striping (\$55,000 each) for \$165,000, 5 ballistic vests with carriers (\$900 each) for \$4,500, desktop computer with set up and software (\$2,000 carryover) for \$2,200, and server upgrades for \$2,000. Police Chief Mark Mallory discussed adding a Pole Barn for coverage for the side by side, other vehicles, and equipment for the Police Department. There was an addition of \$ 8,000 for the pole barn and installation.

For the Fire Department, emergency reporting software for \$9,000 (annually recurring at \$5,700), replacement nozzles, hoses, and connectors for \$5,000. After discussion, the replacement nozzles were reduced to \$2,500.

Next the Council discussed the change of an electric rate increase of 7%, which would be about a penny more per kilowatt. Next, they discussed increasing the city's gas mark up \$.10 per therm. Mrs. Hall will return with commercial garbage rates at the next Budget meeting.

Mrs. Hall discussed the increase for employe health insurance coverage and who would pay this increase. The Council decided to split the increase, the City's portion is increased to \$700 and the employee portion to \$35.01 per month.

Mrs. Hall stated she needs to hire a Grants Coordinator/Clerk to assist her with grants due to the increase in the number of grants the city has. She stated this would be a 30 hour per week position and starting salary \$15.00 per hour. Council asked that she bring back numbers for pay rate increases for employees at \$.50 per hour and \$1 per hour.

Next the Council discussed City Contributions. After discussion, Council agreed to contribute to the Chamber of Commerce at \$5,000, Wild Flower Festival \$1,000, Main Street Blountstown \$5,000, Calhoun County Community Foundation \$2,500, Calhoun County Senior Citizens \$1,500, Blountstown Project Graduation \$100, Pioneer Settlement (Water Bill) \$500.00 and United House Ministries (Utility Bill) \$1,200.

Next the Council discussed pay raises for Mrs. Hall, Chief Hall, Mr. Griffin, and Chief Mallory. The Council decided for a \$3.00 per hour raise, which totals to \$6,240 a year.

The Council will meet in a Budget Workshop on Tuesday, September 05, 2023, at 5:00 P.M.

There being no further business Councilwoman Stephens made the motion to adjourn. Councilman Gaskin seconded the motion. The motion passed. Mayor Shoemake adjourned the meeting at 7:35 P.M.

BY: _____
Tony Shoemake, Mayor

ATTEST: Traci S. Hall
Traci S. Hall, City Manager