

A special meeting of the Murphy Town Council was held on June 29, 2021 at 2:00 pm at City Hall in order to adopt the 2021-2022 fiscal year budget and to make budget amendments to the 2020-2021 budget.

Town Manager: Chad Simons

Mayor: Rick Ramsey

Council: Barry McClure Frank Dickey

Mayor Ramsey called the meeting to order at 2 p.m.

Town Manager Chad Simons said he revised the budget to account for the separation of American Rescue Act Funds into a separate fund, and that he reduced the Rescue Act appropriation to \$250,000 since it is unlikely that they will receive both disbursements in the same fiscal year. Mr. Simons said he also eliminated the \$150,000 American Rescue Act appropriation for the fire department mini pumper since they could not use the monies for that purpose. The \$250,000 budgeted monies will go toward the sewer belt press.

Town Manager Chad Simons informed the Council about the county's new pay plan adopted the previous night, and how their plan places the town at a major disadvantage in terms of police department pay. Mr. Simons said he strongly felt like the Town needed to reconsider adding personnel, and adjusting the town's pay plan in order to remain competitive.

Mayor Ramsey stated that adding a new public works employee to report directly to the Town Manager makes sense to him, and he definitely sees a need. Mayor Ramsey said he would like for the Council to ensure this position was added.

Mr. Dickey stated that the fire department is always taking the brunt of the town's budget woes, and how they actually made the town money. Mr. Simons said he agrees and that he is disappointed that this issue emerged when it did. Mr. Simons said it would be impossible to add two full-time firefighters without increasing taxes, but he did not recommend doing so because he has not had time to analyze and evaluate what they needed to do in order to remain competitive in adjusting the town pay plan. Mr. Simons said that he estimates the town needing to add over \$100,000 to operational expenses in order to adjust the pay plan for patrol officers.

Karen Watson asked if they could compromise by adding one patrol officer and one firefighter. Mr. Simons said it was not that simple, stating that they are competing with the paramedic wage rate within the new county pay plan, and that their EMS schedules allows for three consecutive days off – which is hard to compete against. Mr. Simons said most of their part-time firefighters worked at county EMS, which places them in direct competition with the new county pay plan within the fire department as well. Mr. Simons also said it would be hard to add one employee, and then change their schedule in future years as the town looked to add more full-time staff at the fire department. Mr. Simons said most people would reject the job knowing their schedule would change.

The Town Council also discussed the casino fire protection contract, sewer dumping fees, and the process of establishing the town's own Tourism Development Authority.

Noland Smith said the Council should pass the budget as presented, and amend it as necessary as they proceeded through the fiscal year.

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by McClure, to adopt the 2021-2022 budget as presented. A copy of the budget is attached in the minute book and posted online at townofmurphync.com.

2020-2021 Budget Amendments

Motion was made by Stansell, seconded by McClure, to approve the budget amendments as presented. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the amendments are attached in the minute book.

Adjourn

Motion was made by Stansell, seconded by Hughes to adjourn the meeting at 3:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.