

**TOWN OF BURGAW BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING – STRATEGIC THINKING RETREAT**

DATE: April 27, 2021
TIME: 3:00 PM
PLACE: Historic Train Depot
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Kenneth Cowan
Mayor Pro-tem Wilfred Robbins
Commissioners Bill George, Jan Dawson, Vernon Harrell and James Murphy
STAFF PRESENT IN PERSON: James Gantt, Town Manager
Kristin J. Wells, Town Clerk
Kim Rivenbark, Deputy Town Clerk
Wendy Pope, Finance Officer
Tiffany Byrd, Deputy Finance Officer
Louis Hesse, Building Code Administrator
Cody Suggs, Parks & Recreation Director
Andrea Correll, Planning Director
Alan Moore, Public Works Director
Clay Jasper, Assistant Fire Chief
Jim Hock, Police Chief

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Cowan at 3:00 PM and the invocation was led by Commissioner George.

Before the budget discussion, Mr. Gantt commented on the Eastern North Carolina Recovery Resilience Alliance. He said these meetings were going strong, but since the start of the pandemic, there have been very few. Mr. Gantt said the group is wanting to become more active again and asked the town if we still wanted to be a member of the alliance. It was the consensus of the board to continue the membership.

FY 21-22 Budget Discussion

Mr. Gantt advised the workbooks distributed to the board prior to the meeting are only draft copies of the budget. He said this meeting is for the board to review the draft budget and provide feedback. Mr. Gantt gave an overview of the budget process and reviewed the departmental capital requests. *Presentation documents attached.*

Commissioner Robbins asked about the lease for the proposed additional fire vehicle. Mr. Gantt said this would be a secondary chief's truck, but is not included in the budget. There were brief comments on the use of the vehicle and how the department operates currently without the additional vehicle.

Commissioner Harrell commented on the amount allotted for street paving. Mr. Gantt said there is currently no additional street paving funded in the budget outside of Powell Bill funds. There were brief comments on how street paving projects were funded in the past. Commissioner Robbins asked about the infrastructure status on North Cowan Street. Mr. Moore advised the main sewer line runs down the middle of the street and is in decent shape. He said the water line runs down the left side of the road, so he believes we should be okay with paving that street. Mr. Moore commented on the drainage issue on North Cowan Street and said we don't need to pave if we have to fix the drainage issue soon. Mr. Gantt suggested we fix the drainage problem before paving.

There was some discussion regarding the job duties of the proposed fulltime employee in the Parks, Recreation & Tourism Department. Mr. Gantt said this position would handle facility rentals, assist with special events, planning additional activities, etc. This position would also serve as a staff member to assist the Tourism Development Authority.

Commissioner Harrell asked if the proposed landscaping position would handle all of the parks. Mr. Gantt said this position would handle Rotary Park, Hankins Park and Harrell Park. Commissioner Robbins commented on the maintenance of the walking trail. Mr. Gantt said maintenance of the trail is currently not included with this position.

Mr. Gantt said the request from Parks, Recreation & Tourism for the capital improvements in the amount of \$80k is not included in the budget. Commissioner Harrell asked Mr. Suggs for more details on the capital improvements. Mr. Suggs said the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board did a capital improvements survey a while back to collect feedback from the citizens regarding the future of parks and recreation in town. Mr. Suggs said various projects were included in the survey such as the splash pad and basketball courts that have been spoken about in the past. Mr. Suggs said since there was a request from the public regarding a basketball court, that the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board would probably start with that project first if the funding was available. The estimated amount of \$80k requested was not for any particular project, but funds to get started. There were comments on the use of the basketball courts at the local schools.

Commissioner Robbins asked about planting canopy trees each year throughout town. His thought would be to budget around \$2-3k to plant 15-20 trees per year. Commissioner Harrell commented on a matching grant for planting trees on the railroad right-of-way. Mr. Suggs will look into this.

There was brief discussion on repairs for the Community House. Commissioner Harrell asked how severe the window repairs are in the building. Mr. Hesse said there are some sills that have been temporarily repaired, and if they get water in them, it could cause wall rot. There are a couple of other areas on the building that need repair as well. Mr. Hesse said we don't want them to get to the point where the windows have to be replaced because it would be very difficult to find the same style windows and would be extremely expensive.

Mr. Gantt spoke in depth about the proposed stormwater management utility. He explained the use of these funds, pros and cons, rate examples, etc. Mayor Cowan commented on the 2015 stormwater master plan. He said Village on Eighteen has a problem and we haven't addressed that at all. There was discussion regarding the impact of the fee on larger industries around town.

Mayor Cowan asked about garbage and recycling increases. Mr. Gantt said we are still waiting to hear back from GFL with different options for recycling pick up. He said the rate increased last year but we did not increase the rate for the residents.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Robbins made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson and carried by unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 PM.

Attest: _____
Kristin J. Wells, Town Clerk

Kenneth T. Cowan, Mayor