

TOWN OF SEVEN DEVILS
TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2021
PUBLIC HEARING – FY22 BUDGET – 5:00pm
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING – 5:30pm

The Seven Devils Town Council held a Public Hearings with the format of this meeting being dual Electronic – Go To Meeting #159050989 and In-Person at Town Hall on Tuesday, May 11, 2021. Attendance In-Person Mayor Pro Tem Brad Lambert, Members Wayne Bonomo, Jeffrey Williams & Leigh Sasse; Mayor Larry Fontaine was absent. A quorum was met. Also, present In-Person were Town Manager Debbie Powers & Town Attorney Rob Angle joined at the 5:30pm Council meeting. The minutes were recorded by Town Clerk Hillary Gropp.

INVOCATION

Mayor Pro Tem Lambert gave the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council members & Staff recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Lambert called the public hearing to order at 5:01pm.

Mayor Pro Tem Lambert explained the purpose of the Public Hearing is to receive public comment about the Annual Operating Budget Ordinance Fy2021-2022.

Mayor Pro Tem Lambert explained if any citizens would like to comment at the Public Hearing, they will need to sign up and comments will be limited to three (3) minutes. The Town Clerk controls the timer.

Mayor Pro Tem Lambert stated that citizens will be able to email public comment until noon on Tuesday, June 8, 2021 to publiccomments@sevendevils.net

ROLL CALL

Council members stated their name and announced their presence for the Roll Call.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING – Budget Ordinance FY22

Member Williams made a motion to open the Public Hearing; Member Sasse seconded the motion. All members agreed.

Manager Powers reviewed the FY22 Budget Presentation Highlights, including Revenues & Expenditures. Highlights of the Annual Operating Budget Ordinance FY2021-2022 include:

- The balanced budget FY22 of Revenue Summary & Expenditure Summary = \$2,290,129
- An Ad Valorem tax rate of \$0.51 per one hundred (\$100) valuation of taxable property, as listed for taxes as of January 1, 2021, is hereby levied and established as the official tax rate for the Town of Seven Devils for fiscal year 2021-2022. The rate is based upon a total valuation of \$163,088,598 and estimated collection rate of 99.28%. The purpose of the Ad Valorem tax levy is to raise sufficient revenue to assist in financing municipal operations in Seven Devils.
- Town employees will be given a 4% increase at the beginning of the new fiscal year, consisting of a 2% COLA and a 2% merit to be determined by the Town Manager.
The Town will match an employee's 401(K) contributions up to five percent (5%) of the employee's wage.
- Water Account Fees – Addition of Meter Testing per Homeowner Request = \$200
- Planning & Zoning – Language edit to *Special Use Permit*
- Administrative Fees – Elimination of Email (Send/Receive) each = \$5.00

The proposed Annual Operating Budget Ordinance FY 2021-2022 is available to the public for review in the Town Clerk's office.

FY22 Budget Presentation Highlights:

- Revenues:

- ↔ Property Taxes – remains steady - **NO TAX INCREASE!**
- ↑ Sales tax – 40% increase
- ↑ ABC Revenues 20% increase
- ↑ Utility/Franchise/State Shared Taxes 10% increase
- ↔ Grant Revenues steady
- ↑ Water Sales 8% increase
- ↑ Powell Bill Allocation – 25% increase

- Expenditures:

- ↑ Paving/gravel/hot patch - \$50,000
- ↑ Replace #4 of 7 Water PRV Valves @ \$38,000
- ↑ Well house/booster station roof repairs - \$42,000
- ↑ Police vehicle - \$40,000
- ↑ Personnel – 4% increase – COLA and merit
- ↔ Parks & Rec Tech position – funded by TDA
- ↓ Reduce Debt Load: \$112,500 reduction – New Town Hall
\$29,342 reduction - Snowcloud loan

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bob Bridges, 147 Deepwood Court, stated the Town will likely receive citizen inquiry about tax increase after the upcoming revaluation of property. Bridges asked about what funds comprise the Miscellaneous Revenue in the Executive Summary? Manager Powers replied it's a catch all for funds that are not categorized elsewhere, and this year included a one-time revenue for the Cares Act Funds.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Member Sasse made a motion to close the Public Hearing; Member Williams seconded the motion. All members agreed.

RECESS

Member Bonomo made a motion to recess; Member Williams seconded the motion. All agreed. Town Council recessed at 5:16pm.

CALL TO ORDER FROM RECESS

Member Sasse made a motion to reconvene from recess; Member Williams seconded the motion. All members agreed.

ADOPT AGENDA

Member Bonomo made a motion to adopt the agenda; Member Sasse seconded the motion. All members agreed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Adopt minutes of Town Council Annual Retreat – April 8, 2021

Adopt minutes of Town Council Meeting – April 13, 2021

Member Williams made a motion to approve and adopt the Town Council Annual Retreat & Council Meeting minutes; Member Bonomo seconded the motion. All members agreed.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Works Committee Recommendation FY22

At the April 20, 2021 Public Works Committee meeting, the recommendation for FY22 is below:

Public Works Recommendation to Town Council – 2021

After conclusion of the meeting on Tuesday, April 20, 2021, the committee recommends the following projects be completed in FY22:

1. On Wayside Court to Rock Cove (end) - Resurface & Pave the ditch line. Estimate is \$18,600.
2. Pave ditch line from 146 Deepwood Ct. to the intersection of Skyland Drive. Estimate is \$8,200.
3. Alpine Drive – crack fill (hot patch) from intersection of Edgecliff Ln. to end of Alpine, as necessary.
4. Miscellaneous Gravel, as necessary.

Line Items #3 and #4, not to exceed \$23,200.

Total expenditures NTE \$50,000.

FY22 Proposed budget is \$90,000 for these items; committee recommends carrying over remaining \$40,000 to FY23 for future projects.

Brad Lambert
Committee Chair

Member Sasse made a motion to approve the Public Works Recommendation FY22; Member Bonomo seconded the motion. All members agreed. ~CLOSED~

B. Parks & Recreation Committee – Seven Devils Community Center

At the April 15, 2021 Parks & Recreation Committee meeting, the recommendation to rename Old Town Hall (OTH) to the **Seven Devils Community Center**, was passed, with final approval by Town Council. Member Sasse made a motion to approve the renaming of OTH to the **Seven Devils Community Center**; Member Williams seconded the motion. All members agreed. ~CLOSED~

C. Resolution #2021-03 – Opposing Tree Ordinance Reform


RESOLUTION #2021-03
RESOLUTION BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF SEVEN DEVILS
OPPOSING PROPOSED TREE ORDINANCE REFORM – HB496

WHEREAS, The N.C. General Assembly will be considering HB 496, which would require that all local ordinances regulating the removal of trees be permitted only with the express authorization of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council of Seven Devils believes that trees are an essential and integral part of our mountain town and also believes that the Seven Devils Tree Committee comprised of local residents, can best safeguard the integrity and natural beauty; and

WHEREAS, The preservation of trees is a major objective of our Planning and Zoning Board when considering tree removal requests as specified in our Unified Development Ordinance Tree Protection-Preservation Article B – Section 10; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council of Seven Devils believes that trees in our Town increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and beautify our community. Furthermore, the Town of Seven Devils is proud to have been designated a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council of Seven Devils believes that any state legislation restricting local tree ordinances will damage local efforts to preserve our rural mountain character, hamper economic development, and lower residents' quality of life.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Seven Devils is opposed to HB 496 in its entirety and urges our legislators to vote against this bill. Copies of this resolution are sent to our legislative delegation and to the leadership of the North Carolina General Assembly in an effort to stop HB496 from becoming law.

Adopted this the 11th day of May, 2021.

Larry Fontaine
Larry Fontaine, Mayor

Brad Lambert
Brad Lambert, Mayor Pro Tem

Wayne Bonomo
Wayne Bonomo, Council Member

Leigh Sasse
Leigh Sasse, Council Member

Jeffrey Williams
Jeffrey Williams, Council Member


Attest:
Hillary Gropp
Hillary Gropp, Town Clerk

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Member Bonomo made a motion to approve and adopt Resolution #2021-03; Member Sasse seconded the motion. All members agreed. ~CLOSED~

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Richard Nelson, 420 Highcliff Circle, asked for details about the Tree Ordinance Reform.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

Manager Powers gave the following Administrative Update:

- April 1st – “Soft Opening” of Seven Devils Community Center
- April 8th – Town Council Annual Workshop
- April 15th – IT server updates; Town Manager new desktop computer
- April 21st – Town Manager & Public Works Director met with NCDOT on site – *NCDOT does not have funds for road shoulder repair, but will monitor situation.*
- April 23rd – Town Attorney Angle – Withdraw offer to purchase 2.44 acres – lack of clear title
- April 26th – Board of Adjustment Public Hearing – May Construction
- April 27th – Board of Adjustment – May - Decision to affirm the \$250 daily fine to begin April 28th
- April 28th – Gov. Cooper issues EO209 thru June 1, 2021
- April 30th – Town Clerk Gropp attended Clerk’s Regional Virtual Workshop
- Update April 28th tragedy- Light up Blue, Remember with Red Community Remembrance
- Update NTH property permit for State – Approved & Resubmitting
- Update on American Rescue Plan – 7D to receive \$60,000
- Letter from Sen. Warren Daniel, the Zoning Reform bill is not moving forward

Tree Permits – 7

Projects – 1

Fence Permits – 0

Complaints – 3

Violations – 0

Stop Work Orders – 0

Real Estate Transfers - 9

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board of Adjustment – April minutes – Public Hearing & Meeting

Planning Board – No meeting

Public Works – April minutes

Public Safety Committee – May minutes

Parks & Recreation Committee – April minutes

TDA – April minutes

Tree Committee – No meeting

Public Safety Department

Police Report

Fire Report

Financial Report


COUNCIL COMMENTS

Member Sasse stated that attending remotely caused audio difficulties at the recent Town Council Retreat on April 8, 2021. She asked for clarity, about the topic of **Cottom Update**, and dialogue about a land swap for rezoning consideration. Town Manager Powers replied initial discussions have occurred between Lenny Cottom, Owner of Hawksnest and Mayor Fontaine. The proposed land has been reviewed in person by Cottom, Fontaine, Public Works Director Aldridge, Town Engineer Poore, Town Manager Powers, Mayor Pro Tem Lambert & Jack Byrnes, who serves on the Board of Adjustment, Planning Board and Public Works Committee.

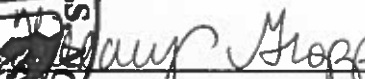
Member Bonomo stated the benefit to the Town will be additional parking at Otter Falls Trail.

ADJOURN

Member Sasse made a motion to adjourn; Member Williams seconded the motion. All members agreed. The meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.


Larry Fontaine, Mayor




Hillary Gropp, Town Clerk