

**TOWN OF WEDDINGTON
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2014 - 6:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

The Town Council of the Town of Weddington, North Carolina, met in a Special Session at the Weddington Town Hall, 1924 Weddington Road, Weddington, NC 28104 on October 6, 2014, with Mayor Bill Deter presiding.

Present: Mayor Bill Deter, Mayor Pro Tem Don Titherington, Councilmembers Michael Smith, Pamela Hadley and Barbara Harrison, Finance Officer Leslie Gaylord and Town Administrator Amy McCollum

Absent: None

Visitors: Jack Parks, Judy Johnston, Steve Carow, Kenny Schott, John Houston, Scott Robinson, Andy Stallings, Peggy Stallings, Steven McLendon, Chuck Rohland, Erik Blowers, Tracy Stone and Walker Davidson.

Item No. 1. Open the Meeting. Mayor Bill Deter opened the October 6, 2014 Special Town Council Meeting at 6:05 p.m. There was a quorum.

Item No. 2. Line Item Review of the 2014-2015 Budget for Providence VFD. Mayor Deter reviewed the documents that were given to the group. He advised that the first worksheet was a summary of the Town's budget. The next document was put together by Finance Officer Leslie Gaylord and shows the financial analysis of Providence VFD from 2010 to present. Mayor Deter advised that at the Council retreat in February Mr. Scott Robinson requested \$630,613 from the Town and the Town approved \$579,825 in June. Mayor Deter stated, "We need to find a way to reduce Providence's requested budget by \$50,788."

The Council and Providence VFD went through their budget line by line. Mayor Deter discussed questions he had regarding certain line items.

Items discussed:

- Mr. Jack Parks advised that they had been successful in getting subsidy in the amount of \$24,165 from Union County.
- Mecklenburg Revenue is subject to change every fiscal year.
- Discussion of how the audit has been paid in the past. Finance Officer Gaylord advised that it was Providence VFD's audit and they have a contract with Tinsley and Terry so the expense should run through their budget.
- Mecklenburg County Radio Subsidy of \$15,608 is part of the \$48,000 received from Mecklenburg County.
- Fireman's Relief Fund – Money is restricted for certain uses and cannot be used for day-to-day operations.
- Union County Fire Fees is for unincorporated areas of Union County that Providence services.
- Council questioned if some expenses were higher due to the renovations to the fire station.
- Mayor Deter questioned why legal fees were budgeted so high. Mr. Parks advised that they have had legal fees as high as \$15,000 and felt that \$5,000 was an appropriate amount to have budgeted.
- Providence's Accountant charges \$450.00 per month and approximately \$1,000 to help with the audit. Mayor Deter questioned how often they go out for bid for accounting services. Providence advised that the accountant also handles all payroll and accounts payable functions. Finance Officer Gaylord felt that \$450.00 per month was reasonable but felt that the extra \$1,000 for audit assistance seemed high. Council increased the audit line item to \$12,500.

- Computer upgrades is for ER software for instant reporting and a new computer to be placed on one of the engines. Providence discussed the benefits of the software upgrade.
- Newsletter – Providence advised that they would like to keep what is listed in the budget to be able to send an envelope with the newsletter. Last year they received \$7,000 in donations from that mailing. They also mentioned that they wanted to do a post-event postcard to be sent out.
- Increase Workman’s Comp to \$14,440 and the Commercial Packet to \$19,008.
- Security monitoring can be reduced from \$600 to \$300.
- Furniture expenses can be reduced by \$1,000.
- How often does lawn care go out for bid? Providence advised that they use who the Town uses.
- Radios/Pagers – Increase to \$5,000.
- 60th Anniversary for Providence VFD this year.
- Sales Tax Refund should increase. Providence to check with Accountant to see what the formula is for what they should get back. Council increased Sales Tax Refund to \$8,000.
- Training officer to give justification for how training budget was determined.
- Personal Protective Equipment costs \$3,000 per firefighter and the life of the equipment is 10 years. Providence would like to replace 6 to 7 every year.
- Compensation – Providence discussed how training bonuses were given. Councilmember Smith questioned why they would not do longevity pay instead of a training bonus. Council questioned how they determined putting in 4% for the increase. Mr. Parks advised that it has been between 5 to 7 years since the last increase for the firefighters. He advised that the increase was only for the hourly employees and it was going to be a bucket of money that the leadership would determine where merit raises were appropriate. Volunteers receive a stipend of between \$30 to \$60 depending on certifications. Council reduced the compensation line item to \$10,000.
- Grants are usually for larger ticket items and not for smaller items such as pagers. Councilwoman Hadley advised that to get grants you have to be in debt, have a certain size territory, so many calls per year and you have to have the need for the equipment and the demographics to show the need.
- Are other fire department’s budgets increasing?

Mayor Deter went through the changes that Providence and the Council determined could be made to the budget. He advised that Providence and the Town still needed to increase income or reduce expenses by \$38,989.

Council took a brief recess.

Council came back into session and discussed the following options:

- Task Providence to go back and try to find \$39,000. Items for possible savings: Donations from newsletter mailout, training budget, Sales Tax Refund and personal protective equipment
- Consider a Budget Amendment to cover the shortfall
- Councilwoman Hadley discussed the idea of having a fundraising event for Providence

Item No. 3. Continuation. Mayor Pro Tem Titherington moved to continue the meeting until November 10, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. to allow time for Providence to see if additional savings could be found. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Councilmembers Smith, Hadley, Harrison and Mayor Pro Tem Titherington
 NAYS: None

The meeting ended at 8:52 p.m.

Bill Deter, Mayor

Amy S. McCollum, Town Clerk