



**Stanley Town Council Special Meeting
Official Minutes
Monday, June 22, 2020**

The special meeting of the Stanley Town Council was held on Monday, June 22, 2020 via Zoom conference call. The following elected officials and staff were present:

Steven Denton, Mayor
Cathy Kirkland, Mayor Pro-Tem
Jimmy Ingold, Council Member
Kerry Hart, Council Member
Bud Pate, Council Member
Victoria Kiser, Council Member

Heath Jenkins, Town Manager
Olga Grishin, Town Clerk
Eric Withers, Fire Chief
Craig Roseberry, Public Works Director
Tug Deason, Recreation Director
Kevin Haney, Financial Director

Manager Jenkins gave an overview of FY2020-2021 Budget: We prepared this budget with anticipation of the reduction of revenues for state sales tax and potentially other revenue issues. The tax rate of \$.54 per \$100 value will remain unchanged. There is brief information about water and sewer enterprise funds and other considerations. We have completed both Phase 1 and Phase 2 Sewer Project and CDBG that we are about to close out. All of these projects being closed will result in a reduction in our budget expenditures.

Council Member Victoria Kiser had few questions: \$125,000 allotted for police radios for the last year and this year. But we did not spend all \$125,000 last year or the previous year. Do we still need to allot the same amount?

Manager Jenkins explained: He had the same question for Finance Director Kevin Haney and Joe Wallace. COVID-19 delayed the payments from the County. And the actual repayment of the money was not going to go into effect until a year after the adoption of the purchase of the radio. It may not end up being that much, but since we have not expended the capital money, they went ahead and re-budgeted those funds.

Council Member Victoria Kiser had another question: \$62,000 from the general fund were allotted for camera and security upgrades. Are we still planning on spending that amount on camera and security upgrades?

Manager Jenkins explained he contacted Police chief and Fire chief. They both experienced issues with not only security cameras but also with the building's access. There is no type of key control over the buildings and the hall. They had that priced out. Instead of trying to put it into an individual budget, we put it into the general government budget, because some funds can be eligible for reimbursement through safety grants. The Town was successful with reimbursements before. Those are the improvements that need to be made.

Council member Victoria Kiser raised a question: \$38,000 allotted for downtown improvements. Are we still planning on making improvements?

Manager Jenkins explained those were funds that were previously allocated. That would be up to the Council to decide to make improvements or not.

Council Member Victoria Kiser asked if the Fire Department paid off the building.

Manager Jenkins said that they still owe debts service on that building.

Council Member Victoria Kiser said there was a comment they have 2-3 years left on a payment.

Manager Jenkins said we are on a downside of that financing. It did not make a lot of sense to try to refinance.

Council Member Victoria Kiser proceeded: her most significant concern with the budget was the amount that was allotted to a Fire Department. They were initially on a different schedule. Then they got changed to a new schedule, and the Fire Chief had to ask for additional funds for that. Council Member Kiser did not think it was responsible for the Council to make downtown improvements when our Fire Department has the potential for going backward. Now is the time to invest in people and not in things. The Town should not be put in a position of losing essential employees like firefighters or police officers.

Mayor Denton asked for a motion to call for a public hearing. Council Member Jimmy Ingold made the motion. Council Member Kerry Hart seconded the motion. A vote was held, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Comment submitted by Michael Crisp and address is 3105 John Calvin Court Stanley, NC was read by the Town Clerk:

Due to the recent events in our nation, I strongly suggest a thorough review of adequate funding for our Police Department to ensure all the necessary training and new program implementations are funded by our Town. As a citizen, the non-negotiable's for me is the safety and health of our community.

To ensure the safety of the citizens now and ongoing in the future, plans to fund the police department to be proactive to circumstances, instead of being reactive, needs to be reviewed. I know there are measures in place, but a deeper look into what is needed should be a priority of the Town.

As one of the lowest-paid police departments in the County, a review of the current pay scale is needed. I strongly suggest the review of the increased pay scale, but also increased training and education to qualify for the pay increase. I do not believe giving someone a raise will keep good officers and solve our problems...Education qualifications need to be a pre-requisite.

Even though Stanley is a small community and we may not be able to attract all the entertainment venues other towns attract, we can lead with the best state of the art police and fire departments in the County. I suggest implementing target dates (1-2 years) to achieve this for our departments who protect and serve the community. With the current time we are living in, I believe state of the art departments will demonstrate to citizens and other investors that we are serious about protecting their investment in our Town. I may not be a business owner, but as a homeowner, we all have an investment in this Town.

Thank you for allowing me to share my comments and concerns.

Mayor Denton said he asked Chief Withers to find out breakdown in the budget of other municipalities of our size. Mayor let the Council make the decision.

Mayor Pro- Tem Kathy Kirkland commented the best thing to leave the budget as it is, and make amendments to the budget depending on the situation.

Council Member Bud Pate stated his concern was for the Police and Fire department having adequate equipment for their job, taking into account all the protests going on. Also, the pay of the police is another concern.

Mayor Denton commented he would not mind to give police/fire department what they needed but he wanted to know Town's revenues were at. At this point Mayor Denton made the comment that the upgrades for downtown improvements were very important to him, personally.

Manager Jenkins explained \$38,000 amount is coming from the Capital project. There were additional funds that were placed in a budget as a line item in the government budget outside of those funds.

Council Member Ingold expressed concern that staff is more important than cameras. And was asking if the Fire department would lose night staff.

Manager Jenkins explained the Town did not remove any current positions that were unfilled in the Police department. We went back to what was proposed for staffing back in 2019-2020 budget. There are salaries at the Police Department that were not filled at that moment. Those were not furloughed or stopped. The funds council Ingold was referring to was an additional fund the Council allocated towards staffing for the Fire Department that was not included back in the budget because that was added in at the beginning of 2019-2020.

Council Member Ingold added If they were going to take step backwards, how are we going to defend our growth to the community. Adding that his concern is protection, as well as, public safety, while trying to find the way to not take a step back. If the Town had the funds we need to help Fire/Police department with all they would need.

Mayor Denton asked Chief Withers to present a comparison of other municipalities as soon as possible.

Mayor Denton asked for a motion to approve budget for the Town of Stanley FY2020-2021. Mayor Pro-Tem Cathy Kirkland made the motion. Council Member Bud Pate seconded the motion. A vote was held and the motion passed with affirmative votes cast by Council Members Bud Pate, Kathy Kirkland, and Kerry Hart, and dissenting votes cast by Council Members Victoria Kiser and Jimmy Ingold.

Mayor Denton asked for a motion to close the public hearing. Council Member Kerry Hart made the motion. Mayor Pro-Tem Cathy Kirkland seconded the motion. A vote was held and the motion passed unanimously.

Continued on next page

Respectfully Submitted:

Steven Denton – Mayor

(OFFICIAL TOWN SEAL)

Heath Jenkins – Town Manager

Olga Grishin - Town Clerk