



Town of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina
Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
Friday, April 19, 2024

A Finance Committee Meeting of Town Council was held on the above date at 9:30 a.m., all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied.

Present were: Patrick M. O'Neil, Mayor
Carl Hubbard, Councilmember
Jody Latham, Councilmember
Justin Novak, Mayor Pro-Tem
Scott Millimet, Councilmember (Chair)
Gary Visser, Councilmember

Councilmember Ned Higgins had previously notified Council that he would be unavailable for this meeting.

I. Call to Order and Confirmation of FOIA Notice

Chair Millimet called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. and stated the press and public had been notified in accordance with State Law. Staff members present were: Monty Anders, Jason Blanton, Charles Drayton, Rebecca Fanning, Amanda Hawver, Joe Henderson, Matt Jensen, Anthony Stith, Bridget Welch, and Max Wurthmann. There were no (0) members of the public and no (0) members of the press in attendance.

II. Review Proposed General Fund Budget FY2025

Mr. Jason Blanton provided a summary of the draft budget highlights for FY 2025 and focused on the differences between FY 2024 and FY 2025. Currently, revenue and expenses are balanced at \$11,505,774. He started with property tax revenue, which makes up most of the expenditures for the Town. Mr. Blanton went through other highlights projected for the FY 2025 year including the School Resource Officer at Sullivan's Island Elementary School, which we received a grant to help fund. The projected revenue for FY 2025 increased by approximately \$795,000.

He then briefly went over the projected budget for each department. The Fire Department saw an 8.1% increase which he then detailed. Most of the increase comes from hiring additional personnel and the increased cost of insurance.

The Police Department saw a 6.6% decrease, mainly due to the SRO Grant and the purchase of 8 police cruisers in FY 2024.

The Maintenance Department saw a 12.7% decrease, if FY 2025 does not include any Boardwalk repairs. Without FY 2024 Boardwalk repairs, there is an increase of 51%.

The Recreation Department has a 62.5% increase, with the cost of Christmas decorations moving from the Fire Department budget to Recreation. There is also added funding for Stith Park maintenance.

The Administration Department has a small decrease of 0.4% due to less legal fees and the Building and Planning Department has a 6.4% increase with the addition of the Director of Resiliency and Natural Resources.

Mr. Blanton discussed the factors that affect expenses, emphasizing there will not be an increase for State Retirement System Contributions. He stated the FY 2025 Budget is balanced as required by State Code and overall saw a 1.5% decrease in budgeted expenditures. He then took questions from Council about specific line items. There was discussion about purchasing a backhoe for the Maintenance Department to use in various projects around the Island, particularly involving stormwater management. Council decided they would first try to find a company to have on retainer for ditch debris clearing. They further discussed Island maintenance and made some changes to line items in the budget.

Discussion was continued about the budget page by page and also asked questions about various line items. The Fire Department added personnel to align with national standards of “two-in, two-out,” which also keeps insurance rates down. The charge for County officers has increased per hour. Council would like to look into the possibility of having officers on duty for afternoon/evening traffic as well. There was also discussion about possibly increasing the dog license fees, primarily to cover the costs of coyote abatement. There is a significant increase in the IT budget, mainly for preventative security. The Police Department is also looking to upgrade their technology for this fiscal year.

The meeting was concluded with requests for staff to look into the cost of a few items, as well as for them to make the discussed changes. The budget will again be discussed at the May Council Workshop and there will be a Public Hearing determined at a later date.

III. Adjourn

Motion was made by Mayor O'Neil, seconded by Councilmember Hubbard, to adjourn the meeting at 11:19 a.m., carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bridget Welch