

MINUTES OF
CITY OF CREEDMOOR
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
FEBRUARY 29, 2020
8:30 A.M.

Present

Mayor Bobby Wheeler, Mayor Pro Tem Del Mims, Commissioner Kechia Brustmeyer-Brown, Commissioner Ed Mims, and Commissioner Neena Nowell. Also present were City Manager Korena Weichel, City Clerk Terry Hobgood, Police Chief Keith King, Finance Director Reuben Carden, Community Development Director Michael Frangos, Public Works Director Steve Edwards, and Administrative Services Director Nancy Riegel.

Absent

Commissioner Kicinski

Call to Order

Mayor Wheeler called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Commissioner Nowell moved to excuse Commissioner Kicinski from the meeting. Motion approved 4-0.

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Pro Tem Mims moved to approve the agenda the addition of an invocation and the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Motion approved 4-0.

Mayor Pro Tem Mims offered the invocation, and Commissioner Ed Mims led the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Manager FY21 Budget Preview

City Manager Weichel presented an outline and schedule for the Strategic Planning Workshop as well as the timeline the board should expect with the development and approval of the FY21 budget. Weichel then gave the board a summary of the city's current financial position. FY19 Audit showed an available Fund Balance of \$8.33 million (equal to 232% of the FY20 General Fund budget). The year-end FY20 available Fund Balance is projected to be \$7.14 million due to \$692,000 budgeted in the FY20 budget and \$497,000 encumbered to fund 50% of the Creedmoor Volunteer Fire Department's (CVFD) ladder truck purchase.

Weichel then showed a ten-year history of Ad Valorem tax rate, which has been reduced from just over \$0.72 per \$100 valuation in FY10 to its current rate of just under \$0.615 per \$100 valuation. Last year, Weichel had recommended an incremental tax increase to prepare for projected expenses in FY21 but that was not approved by the seated Board. The tax rate remained static, so staff will have to revisit the originally projected \$0.55 - \$0.75 increase needed for FY21. Staff will present options to the board at the budget workshop scheduled for April 20, 2020. Weichel then proceeded to outline projected increased costs in FY21 including additional staffing needs for Recreation, Public Works, Code Enforcement, and the Police Department as well as increased operational costs in conjunction with the opening of the Creedmoor Community Center.

Weichel also described another potential revenue stream by utilizing the NC Municipal Vehicle Tax. The first \$5 taxed can be used for any lawful purpose, and the remaining amount may be used to maintain, repair, or construct streets. Weichel then gave an update on the status of other city financial funds starting with the Powell Bill Fund, which had a FY19 year-end balance of \$348,000, and is expected to have a balance of \$288,000 at the end of FY20. The Recreation Fund had a FY19 year-end balance of \$290,000 with \$34,000 budgeted to be used in FY20. The Stormwater Fund had a FY19 year-end balance of \$252,000 and a projected FY20 year-end balance of \$321,000. The Water and Sewer Capital Improvement funds have balances of \$376,000 and \$522,000 respectively. These will increase nominally due to interest earned, but no additional funding has been budgeted for these accounts.

Finally, Weichel summarized the status of the three outstanding Capital Projects. Lake Rogers Phase II was completed in November 2019, and now the board must consider prioritization of future phased construction. Community Center and Cross City Trail are both scheduled for completion by the end of summer 2020. The Capital Reserve Fund balance is estimated to have a remaining balance of \$24,313 by the close of all planned construction.

Department Presentations

The retreat continued with presentations from all city department heads outlining major accomplishments and future goals for their respective departments. Finance Director Reuben Carden reviewed current revenue projections as compared to the previous fiscal year, and the status of the city's investment accounts. Finally, Carden updated the board on the status of recent and ongoing capital projects.

Administrative Services Director Nancy Riegel presented on efforts to update the city's personnel policy, recruiting for vacant police officer positions, and review of future needs for recreation, facility maintenance, and public works. Riegel also outlined the upcoming efforts by the city to enact the federally mandated ADA transition plan. A proposal from an experienced engineering firm will be presented to the board at an upcoming meeting.

City Clerk/Public Information Officer Terry Hobgood presented on changes needed to the city's Code of Ordinances, marketing and communication efforts, increases in social media audience, and coverage of capital projects and large events. Hobgood also presented on special projects slated for the coming year including updates to the city's Emergency Operations Plan, and enhanced marketing/economic development efforts.

Police Chief Keith King presented a summary of calls for service for the Creedmoor Police Department, which have mostly held steady for the last two years. King reported that overall police activities have increased, leading to a marked downturn in violent crimes, drug crimes, and traffic violations. The overall crime rate has increased the last few years, but primarily for non-violent offenses. King reported that the Creedmoor Police Department continues to exceed the national average for case clearance rate, and promoted early efforts in Creedmoor to successfully implement "Raise the Age" policies to decrease the intake of juveniles in the criminal justice system. King also highlighted challenges in recruiting and retaining personnel, and previewed a potential budget request to add positions to maintain services alongside Creedmoor's increase in population. Finally, King outlined equipment replacement needs, and the various outreach programs that the Police Department participates in throughout the year.

Public Works Director Steve Edwards presented a summary of various duties and responsibilities for the Public Works Department. The major responsibilities of Public Works include maintenance of the city street system, facilities, park land, and stormwater system as well as event support and emergency response. Edwards outlined goals and expected challenges for the upcoming fiscal year including mapping of the city's stormwater system, increased service expectations with the addition of the Cross City Trail and the Creedmoor Community Center.

Community Development Director Michael Frangos presented a recap of departmental highlights for the Community Development Department over the last year. This included permitting statistics, work on the municipal stormwater management system, progress on residential development at Amberleaf, Holly Creek, and Brames Crossing, and construction of the Cross City Trail and the NC DOT realignment of NC Highway 56. Frangos also outlined several projects for the upcoming year including the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Development Ordinance updates mandated by NC GS 160D, Code of Ordinance updates, and updates to the city's technical specifications manual.

Parks and Recreation Committee Chair David Richardson presented a recap of major events and recreation programs sponsored by the City of Creedmoor including the Creedmoor Music Festival, First Fridays in Creedmoor, July Fourth Fireworks, and Christmas Tree Lighting and Parade. Richardson highlighted the increase in programming expected with the opening of the Creedmoor Community Center. The Parks and Recreation Committee presented draft policies and proposed rental rates for Board consideration for the new facility.

Mayor Wheeler called for a recess at 10:50 a.m. The meeting resumed at 11:00 a.m.

Granville County Update // County Manager Michael Felts

Granville County Manager Michael Felts presented the seven primary objectives of the county: 1. Increase the county-wide tax base by \$80 million 2. Improve inter-government relations through partnerships and shared services 3. Educate the community to improve public awareness of local government issues, activities, benefits and opportunities 4. Reduce the annual staff turnover/termination rate to 6% 5. Improve employee recognition and morale through the implementation of an awards and recognition program 6. Improve and increase the number of volunteer programs, sites, and opportunities 7. Identify public safety requirements and improve communications of services with the public. Felts also gave an update on several major county projects including the construction of the new Law Enforcement Center and Animal Shelter, renovation of the Granville-Vance Health Department, and expansion of Granville Athletic Park.

SGWASA // Board Chair Jimmy Gooch and Executive Director Scott Schroyer

SGWASA Board Chair Jimmy Gooch and Executive Director Scott Schroyer presented an overview of SGWASA's major utility infrastructure and services provided to residents of southern Granville County. Schroyer and Gooch spoke about the recently awarded contract to renovate the SGWASA water treatment plant beginning in the spring of 2020. Schroyer also spoke about the implementation of studies to expand wastewater treatment services including the proposed I-85 project. Finally, they reported on upcoming goals for SGWASA including website updates, and improvements in communications with customers.

Mayor Wheeler called for a recess at 12:00 p.m. The meeting resumed at 12:30 p.m.

Creedmoor Fire Department // Chief Billy Fisher and Captain Richard Ray

Chief Billy Fisher and Captain Richard Ray presented on the history, challenges, and future needs of the CVFD. The CVFD has a force of thirty volunteer firefighters that serve southern Granville and northern Wake counties. The Creedmoor fire district has a population of 9,855 people across 68.3 square miles, and the CVFD averages three hundred runs each year. Fisher and Ray reported that the ladder truck approved for the CVFD in 2019 has been selected, and they will soon have a financing contract ready for execution. The CVFD expects to make the same funding request for the FY 21 budget as they did for FY 20. Fisher also reported that a request for funding a fire engine to replace antiquated apparatus could be expected in the next year or two.

Strategic and Budget Priorities Discussion

Alan Steinbeck with the Pritchett Steinbeck Group led a board discussion of strategic and budget priorities. Steinbeck began with a presentation framing how the board should consider limited staff capacity to take on and complete additional projects on top of the normal day-to-day functions of the city government. Steinbeck spoke about how governments have to place their primary focus on maintaining critical infrastructure and completing mandated projects. Steinbeck also discussed the importance of having a vision, and ensuring that every project that the city takes on is working towards that vision. Finally, Steinbeck presented a capacity analysis of the city's current staffing. Steinbeck's analysis indicates an availability of 1.5 full time equivalent staffing hours that can be focused on special projects. Steinbeck stated that the capacity level illustrates the board's need to prioritize and adjust expectations for the completion of special projects whether they are mandates or city initiatives. Steinbeck recommended that the board implement a planning model to measure the status and timetable for each project as they move through various stages of completion.

Mayor Wheeler called for a recess at 2:00 p.m. The meeting resumed at 2:10 p.m.

Project Prioritization

Alan Steinbeck asked the board to conduct a prioritization exercise using a chart listing all current, mandated, and other projects that various board member have expressed interest in the city pursuing. Each board member was asked to rank their top three projects that they wish to immediately prioritize, and then three more that they would like to hold future discussions on.

Mayor Wheeler listed his top three priorities as SGWASA, Cross City Trail Phase II Lighting, and Crosswalk Warning Signals. Wheeler's next three priorities were Lake Rogers Park Master Plan, Main Street Sidewalk Elevation Issue, and Economic Development Incentives.

Mayor Tem Del Mims listed her top three priorities as SGWASA, Cross City Trail Phase II Lighting, and 109 Park Avenue. Del Mims' next three priorities were the Creedmoor Community Center, Additional Sidewalks, and Economic Development Incentives.

Commissioner Brustmeyer-Brown listed her top three priorities as SGWASA, Cross City Trail Phase II Lighting, and Crosswalk Warning Signals. Brustmeyer-Brown's next three priorities were Creedmoor Gateway Entry, 109 Park Avenue, and Creedmoor Community Center.

Commissioner Ed Mims listed his top three priorities as SGWASA, 109 Park Avenue, and Additional Sidewalks. Ed Mims' next three priorities were Creedmoor Community Center, Livestreaming, and Economic Development Incentives.

Commissioner Nowell listed her top three priorities as SGWASA, Cross City Trail Phase II Lighting, and Creedmoor Gateway Entry. Nowell's next three priorities were 120 Sanderford Street, 109 Park Avenue, and Creedmoor Community Center.

Among the five present board members, each project received the following votes for top-level priority SGWASA (5 votes), Cross City Trail Phase II Lighting (4 votes), Crosswalk Warning Signals (2 votes), 109 Park Avenue (2 votes), and Additional Sidewalks (1 vote).

For next-level priority, each project received the following votes: Creedmoor Community Center outside recreation development (4 votes), Economic Development Incentives (3 votes), 109 Park Avenue (2 votes), 120 Sanderford Street (1 vote), Creedmoor Gateway Entry (1 vote), Lake Rogers Master Plan (1 vote), Main Street Sidewalk Elevation Issue (1 vote), and Livestreaming (1 vote).

Mayor Wheeler called for a recess at 4:05 p.m. The meeting resumed at 4:15 p.m.


Board Reports

Commissioner Ed Mims brought forth several items that he wanted the board to discuss further in the future including: the City's Comprehensive plan, the need to increase recreational programming for teenagers, livestreaming board meetings, acquiring land for future use by the city, addition of more public parking downtown, beautifying the Creedmoor gateway entrances, maintenance of the Creedmoor cemetery, expanding the Creedmoor Music Festival, establishing a volunteer committee, full-time employee staffing of the CVFD, collaborating with the Town of Butner, the importance of the Census on Creedmoor's future, renovation of Hawley Middle School and increasing city involvement in the local school system, and the need for the county to establish emergency shelters in southern Granville County.


The rest of the board members declined the opportunity to present any additional reports.

Adjourn

Commissioner Brustmeyer-Brown moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:40 p.m. Motion approved 4-0.


Robert V. Wheeler, Mayor

ATTEST:


Terry A. Hobgood, Jr., City Clerk