

**Town of Garner
Council Special Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2019**

The Council met in a Special Meeting at 8:30 a.m. in the Town Hall Training Room at 900 7th Avenue, Garner, NC.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: Mayor Ronnie Williams

Present: Mayor Ronnie Williams, Mayor ProTem Ken Marshburn, Council Member Kathy Behringer, Council Member Buck Kennedy, Council Member Elmo Vance, and Council Member Gra Singleton.

Staff Present: Rodney-Town Manager, Matt Roylance-Asst. Town Manager-Operations, John Hodges-Asst. Town Manager-Development Services, Mike Franks-Budget & Special Projects Manager, Tony Beasley-Inspections Director, Lori Smith-Police Captain, Joe Binns-Police Captain, Sonya Shaw-PRCR Director, Rob Smith-Asst. PRCR Director, BD Sechler-Human Resources Director, Forrest Jones-Public Works Director, Pam Wortham-Finance Director, Chris Johnson-Town Engineer, Joe Stallings-Economic Development Director, Rick Mercier-Communications Director, Stella Gibson-Town Clerk

Also Present: Matt Poole-GVFR Fire Chief

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mr. Franks reviewed the budget schedule and the decision packages funded.

Mr. Franks presented highlights of the FY2019/2020 budget. Mr. Franks also explained in preparing the budget a reduction exercise was performed to see what could be cut in order to balance the budget. Identified reductions were not so severe as to cause programmatic impacts.

Council discussed impacts to the budget the Town has no control over such as increased insurance costs state mandate to increase changes to the pension fund and costs for fall and spring cleanup as well as others.

Mayor ProTem asked if things would change after the County re-evaluation and Council Member Kennedy added the average home in Garner is valued at \$280,000. Building permit fees are \$3,600 and if water and sewer is included the permit fee is \$8,000. Ms. Wortham reminded Council of the need to be mindful as inspection fees can only be used for inspections.

Council discussed the possibility of adding a 3-cent tax increase, however, since the County is already proposing a large tax increase, this increased tax rate seems like a burden to Garner's residents. Staff reminded Council taxes have not been increased in many years to address increased operational costs. The Town is not receiving enough money to provide the services needed. Council requested some talking points to help the public understand there is a need to raise the taxes.

Council Member Singleton stated the maximum he would support is a 2-cent tax increase. Mayor ProTem Marshburn, Council Member Behringer, Council Member Kennedy, and Council Member Vance were supportive of a tax increase.

Action: Council will review information and provide staff with options to consider

Motion: Kennedy
Second: Marshburn
Vote: 5:0

ADJOURNMENT: 3:48 p.m.