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SUMMARY OF A BUDGET WORK SESSION HELD BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA, MONDAY, MAY 4, 1998 AT 7 P.M.

Mayor Waldorf called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Council Members in attendance were Julie Andresen, Flicka Bateman, Joyce Brown, Joe Capowski, Pat Evans, Kevin Foy, Lee Pavao and Edith Wiggins. Also in attendance were Town Manager Cal Horton, Assistant Town Manager Sonna Loewenthal, Assistant to the Manager Ruffin Hall, Engineering Director George Small, Finance Director James Baker, Public Works Director Bruce Heflin, Administrative Analyst Randy Ballard, Public Works Superintendents Fred Battle, Harv Howard, Richard Terrell and Bill Terry, Urban Forester Curtis Brooks, Transportation Director Bob Godding, Interim Parks and Recreation Director Bill Webster and Town Clerk Peter Richardson.

Noting that Personnel Director Pat Thomas was out of town, Mr. Horton suggested that personnel and compensation matters be deferred to the May 20th budget work session. There was Council concurrence to discuss the personnel-related matters on May 20th. Mr. Horton also said he hoped that the Council would agree to select one of two consultants to review the Towns' compensation system beginning in the fall.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Street Maintenance Services

Council Member Andresen requested clarification about the permitted Town uses of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds. Mr. Horton said that these funds were provided by the Federal government to reimburse the Town for storm-related damage. He noted that the funds could be used for purposes such as equipment replacement and clean water programs. Council Member Andresen said she was concerned that the Town was behind schedule on its street maintenance schedule. Mr. Heflin stated that although the Town's street maintenance schedule was not optimal, a reasonable level of service was being provided to Town residents. Council Member Andresen asked whether or not it would take two to three years to catch up on street maintenance projects. Mr. Heflin said although the maintenance schedule would be in better condition, it was possible that the Town would not be totally caught up in two or three years.

Council Member Capowski inquired what steps could be taken to improve the maintenance of State-maintained streets in the Town. Mr. Heflin said that the Town could urge the State to spend more funds on these roads, especially for "spot" type problems and specific desired projects. Mayor Waldorf said that the Council could ask members of the local legislative delegation to assist with this matter. Stating that a number of major potholes had developed along the relatively new Fordham Boulevard, Council Member Evans said she thought that the Council should seek the assistance of the local legislative delegation regarding State roadway maintenance. Council Member Capowski inquired about the practicality of the Town maintaining some State roads. Noting the significant cost ramifications involved, Mr. Horton said it was not a good idea for the Town to take over these responsibilities. He added that Town staff could provide rough cost estimates if the Council chose to pursue this change in roadway

maintenance. Mayor Waldorf said she did not favor having Town staff maintain State roads in Town limits.

Council Member Bateman inquired about the responsive of the North Carolina Department of Transportation to the Town's requests for roadway maintenance. Mr. Heflin said that State DOT had been fairly responsive to past Town concerns. Council Member Andresen inquired about the response time for roadway maintenance requests. Mr. Heflin said response times varied between one day and several weeks. He added that the Department of Transportation's top priority was the maintenance of interstate highways. Council Member Brown suggested contacting the local legislative delegation and the Secretary of the Department of Transportation. Mayor Waldorf said that there appeared to be Council concurrence to take both courses of action. She inquired whether or not staff should recommend problem areas for resolution. Council Member Capowski said that Finley Golf Course Road, a State maintained road, was in very poor condition.

Council Member Capowski said that a substantial portion of State roads, including South Columbia Street and the U.S. 15-501 Bypass, did not have curb and guttering, posing a significant hazardous to bicyclists. Mr. Heflin said that the Department of Transportation would respond to pavement edge failures as soon as possible. Mr. Horton said that from time to time the Town made some spot repairs on State-maintained roads. Mr. Heflin stated that the Town cleared snow and ice from State roads and swept State roads in the Town. Council Member Foy inquired whether it was correct that resurfacing projects were contracted out by the Town. Mr. Heflin said that this was correct. He added that Town road maintenance crews did interim type repairs such as crack sealing. Council Member Foy asked whether additional funds were needed for resurfacing of Town streets. Mr. Heflin said any additional funds authorized by the Council could be used to pay for an additional pavement patching crew.

Council Member Brown said that it would be a serious mistake for the Town to maintain any State roads just because the State had not been doing a good job of maintaining State roads and bridges in the Town.

Mayor Waldorf noted that the staff's recommendation was to raise the level of funding in order to keep up with the fifteen-year cycle of street maintenance.

Street Lighting

Council Member Andresen inquired about the scope of the Town's existing street lighting program. Mr. Heflin said that funding constraints made it necessary to focus on street lighting needs in new neighborhoods, with some infill in existing neighborhoods. Council Member Andresen inquired whether or not there were any serious lighting problems in existing neighborhoods which needed prompt attention. Mayor Waldorf suggested that the Council count on the observations and recommendations of activities such as the community policing program to make recommendations regarding street lighting needs. Council Member Brown inquired about the status of street lighting concerns identified by University students approximately twelve to eighteen months ago. Mr. Horton said that all of these concerns had been addressed.

Council Member Evans said that many residents in existing neighborhoods did not favor additional street lighting.

Council Member Andresen suggested that the Council ask Town staff to report to the Council on areas where more lighting might help to reduce the incidence of crime. Mayor Waldorf noted that the Police Department had provided such reports in the past. Mr. Horton said the Police Department would be pleased to report on this matter.

Council Member Bateman inquired whether or not Town staff desired the Council's assistance in addressing service difficulties with Duke Power. Mr. Heflin said that although there had been some delays in the past, Duke Power officials were working very hard to fully cooperate with the Town's service needs. Mayor Waldorf said she could write a letter to Duke Power officials if requested to do so by Town staff.

Noting that she would need to leave the meeting early this evening to honor another commitment, Council Member Wiggins requested that the Council next discuss the solid waste collection items included on the agenda. Council Member Brown suggested the possibility of the Council discussing pay as you throw collection systems at the fall planning retreat or at a special work session. Mayor Waldorf said that this was an excellent suggestion. She said that there appeared to be Council concurrence to defer discussion on these items until the fall. Noting that Town staff had done a fair amount of work on these matters, Mr. Horton said that staff simply needed general Council guidance in these matters.

Council Member Evans said she had some criticism that there had not been adequate notice of the Town's new garbage preparation requirements. She said if the Town converted to a "pay as you throw" system, a good public information program was needed.

Mayor Waldorf asked whether the Council favored a work session in September to discuss refuse collection alternatives. Mr. Horton said that staff would be pleased to schedule such a work session.

Council Member Brown suggested the possibility of using clear plastic bags so that collectors could see what was in the bags. Council Member Pavao said he had received feedback from three or four constituents who did not want to put their refuse in plastic bags. Council Member Andresen asked whether the Town saved any money by requiring plastic bagging of refuse. Mr. Horton said that the bagging requirement improved the working conditions for collectors.

Maintenance of Bicycle Paths

Council Member Andresen inquired how often bicycle paths in the Town were cleaned. Mr. Heflin said that bicycle paths were cleaned twice per month in spring and summer and once per month for the balance of the year. Stating that he realized the topographical differences between the two communities, Council Member Capowski said that bicycle paths were generally better maintained in Carrboro. He urged the Town and State to pay attention to maintaining the right hand edge of roadways as a means of enhancing the safety of bicyclists.

Maintenance Staffing for Northern Community Park

Council Member Bateman asked why this item was being recommended for funding when the park would not be opened until the following fiscal year. Ms. Loewenthal said it was necessary to establish root masses and otherwise maintain playing fields prior to the opening of the park facility. Mr. Horton said that appropriate adjustments could be made, depending upon when hiring of the proposed new positions took place.

Council Member Andresen inquired about the possibility of privatization, rather than hiring new Town staff. Mr. Horton said that privatization savings were largely derived from lower pay or benefits to contracted employees. Noting that the Town contracted out for sidewalk construction, Council Member Andresen suggested that the Council also contract out this cyclical work. She inquired about the justification for adding new positions to maintain the Northern Community Park. Mr. Heflin said that based on the size and types of areas to be maintained, Town staff believed that it would be most efficient to have the new positions handle maintenance activities such as mowing, mulching and general clean-up. He also said that staff could develop requests for proposals for private landscaping firms.

Council Member Andresen inquired about the possibility of contracting out any individual services. Mr. Battle said although it might be possible to contract out the mowing of ball fields, previous investigation by Town staff found that the Town could mow the fields less expensively than contracting for these services.

Council Member Pavao inquired whether or not any local firms specialized in ball field preparation. Mr. Battle said that he was not familiar with any such firms.

Stating the proposed park would not open until later in the year, Council Member Bateman suggested hiring the proposed new positions at that time. Mr. Horton said that staff would be pleased to make necessary adjustments and come back to the Council with a reduced figure.

Building Maintenance Staff

Mayor Waldorf noted that no positions had been added to the building maintenance function since 1993-94, despite a large increase in maintenance needs and the number of work orders. Council Member Andresen said she supported the staff's proposal regarding this item.

Safety and Training Officer

Council Member Andresen asked whether the officer was specifically for the Public Works Department. Mr. Heflin said it was possible that training protocols could also possibly be developed for the Housing and Transportation Departments. Council Member Andresen asked whether an intended function of the position would be to reduce accidents. Mr. Heflin said that the safety and training officer would be responsible for developing response plans and conducting on-site and work place investigations and providing safety training for employees.

Mayor Waldorf inquired whether the Council could receive a report on the position's progress, in the event that the Council authorized funding for the position. Mr. Heflin said that this was possible. Council Member Foy requested information about the extent of workers compensation claims in the Public Works Department. Mr. Horton said that Town staff could provide this information.

Council Member Foy inquired about the extent of OSHA citations and fines incurred by the Town. Mr. Horton said although three separate Town departments had been cited by OSHA, the Federal government considered the Town to be one organization, subject to greater fines for each violation.

Landscape Design Position

Council Member Andresen asked whether or not the proposal was to make a half-time position into a full-time position. Mr. Heflin said this was correct, adding that the other primary task of this position was to serve as a landscape architect. Mr. Brooks said that three people had served in the position since the program inception, each having been a new graduate of a landscape architecture program. Mr. Brooks also said he thought that the proposed salary was competitive.

Construction Crew

Council Member Capowski inquired about the proposed scope of projects for the new crew. Mr. Heflin said that it would be possible to use funds in the capital improvements program to offset a portion of labor costs for individual projects. Mr. Horton said it would be possible to do far more work with an additional Town construction crew

Mayor Waldorf said she was interested in thinking further about this proposal. Council Member Foy asked whether the Mayor was concerned that the crew would eventually run out of projects.

Mayor Waldorf said it was possible for the Town to say that the positions would only be funded for a certain number of years.

Tree Planting Program

Council Member Evans inquired about the number of instances in which the Town had received reimbursement from drivers who had caused damage to Town landscaping. Mr. Baker said staff could provide follow-up information to the Council. Council Member Evans commended the Town for having entranceways which were very desirable and well maintained, compared to many other communities.

Council Member Andresen said she agreed with the staff's assessment of emphasizing the maintenance of existing trees. She also suggested focusing on specific areas which needed tree plantings, such as along a portion of Airport Road.

Council Member Capowski said that the Town's entranceway markers had turned out to be a marvelous investment in community pride. Mayor Waldorf said that the NC 86 entryway corridor was a very important one. She also urged the Council to give priority to maintaining the existing tree canopy along Franklin Street. Council Member Evans said it was important to plant trees in the downtown area for additional future canopies.

Council Member Brown said she agreed that the downtown was a good place to focus on trees for the Town's future. Mr. Brooks said that Town staff was proposing the planting of red maples, scarlet oaks and other trees in the downtown area. He noted that one of the biggest challenges facing staff was the removal of some trees which were not in good shape. Council Member Brown requested that the staff keep the Council informed about tree plantings.

Council Member Foy asked whether the Town had an integrated tree plan for the downtown area. Mr. Heflin said this was correct, noting that efforts were made to keep older trees alive and replace them as they died. Mr. Horton said that the Town's streetscape plan included the replacement of shrubs and a commit to not take down any living trees except under very unusual conditions. Mr. Brooks said that Town staff would present a report regarding trees and streetscaping in the one hundred block of Franklin Street within the next few weeks.

Council Member Andresen said that tree planting efforts could possibly be focused downtown or along Airport Road. Council Member Foy said he favored tree plantings along the five-lane section of Airport Road. Stating that the downtown area would be part of the Town's streetscape effort, Council Member Evans said that some members of the business community had suggested tree planting efforts along U.S. 15-501 in the vicinity of the Eastgate Shopping Center.

Mayor Waldorf suggested that staff could review the needs of the downtown, Airport Road and U.S. 15-501 areas and come back to the Council with an options report. Council Member Brown requested that the staff's report contain information about the types of trees recommended for planting. Mr. Heflin said that staff could provide applicable information reports to the Council. Council Member Foy inquired whether or not the Department of Transportation provided any financial assistance for future tree plantings along Interstate 40 and U.S. 15-501 in the Town. Mr. Brooks said that there was no State or Town funding currently set aside for this purpose on these roadways.

Street Cleaning

Council Member Capowski said he thought that having cleaner roads in the Town was a high priority item. Council Member Capowski also said that he would support a higher level of expenditure for the cleaning Town streets.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Chief Dan Jones said that he recently attended a meeting in Washington, D.C., attended by FEMA Director James Lee Witt. Chief Jones reported that FEMA was in the process of reviewing and redesigning its organizational structure to expedite services to state and local

governments following major disasters. He also said that FEMA was placing a greater level of emphasis on emergency preparedness grants for local governments.

Council Member Andresen inquired about Chief Jones' professional opinion regarding the separation of the Town's public safety functions into Police and Fire Departments. Chief Jones said he thought that the separation into two departments came at a good time for the community. He noted that it was especially difficult for employees to be individually proficient in providing police, fire and emergency medical services. Chief Jones said that separating the services provided opportunities for higher competency levels in the individual disciplines. He noted that during their twelve to fourteen hour work days, firefighters conducted public education classes, composed pre-fire building plans and took part in training classes.

Council Member Andresen inquired what percentage of firefighters held other jobs. Chief Jones said that approximately sixty percent of firefighters held other jobs, with many serving as volunteers in other fire departments. Council Member Andresen inquired why a large fire truck was dispatched for drug-related emergencies. Chief Jones said that dispatching a first responder unit was the most effective and efficient way to respond and to have crews back in service on a more timely basis. Council Member Evans asked whether any of the Town's firefighters lived out of state. Chief Jones said he was not aware of any Town firefighters who resided out of state. He added that the largest percentage of Town firefighters resided in rural Orange County.

Supplemental Staffing Request

Council Member Foy inquired how it would be logistically possible to have crews stationed at Fire Station Number Three simultaneously. Chief Jones said that some structural building renovations would make it possible to accommodate two crews at the station. Council Member Foy inquired whether or not it would be necessary to double the number of fire crews at other Town fire stations in the future. Chief Jones said that although present fire station coverage was quite good, it might be necessary to add a second crew at fire station number two (Glen Lennox) some time in the future. Mr. Horton said that the major unknown in terms of future fire station needs was the ultimate buildout of the Horace Williams tract. Council Member Capowski asked whether it was possible that a Town fire station would be located on the Horace Williams tract. Mr. Horton suggested that it would be desirable for the University should provide its own site, station, equipment and personnel for this tract in the future.

Council Member Capowski inquired when ladder trucks were dispatched on fire-related calls. Noting that the ladder truck was also a pumper truck, Chief Jones said that the ladder truck was used to supplement the Town's existing four pumper trucks. Mr. Horton noted that fire department operations would be more efficient if another pumper truck and twelve additional crew members were made available. Council Member Foy inquired whether or not the City of Durham provided mutual aid assistance to the Town's fire department. Chief Jones said that although the Town called on the City of Durham infrequently for mutual aid, it often times called upon the Parkwood Fire Department, the Northern Chatham Volunteer Squad, the Carrboro Fire Department and other local departments for mutual aid assistance.

Mayor Waldorf asked whether or not there would be a need for an additional fire station if the Town and Town of Carrboro were to merge in the future. Chief Jones said it was likely that the Town of Carrboro would need a second and third fire station in the future. Mayor Waldorf inquired about the level of staff satisfaction regarding mutual aid agreements. Mr. Horton said that the existing mutual aid agreements were working very well for all parties. Council Member Foy asked whether or not the need for mutual aid agreements negatively impacted fire insurance ratings. Chief Jones said there was no adverse impact.

Council Member Capowski inquired about the amount of the proposed budget earmarked for the additional ladder truck and crew. Mr. Horton said there were presently no funds earmarked for these purposes in the recommended budget. Council Member Andresen asked why no funding was included. Mr. Horton said that it was his overall assessment that these items could be deferred for one year. Council Member Brown said that it would be helpful to have information about impacts on tax rates relative to the proposed new fire equipment and personnel. Mr. Horton said that Town staff would be pleased to provide this information.

Requests for Fire Department Equipment

Chief Jones presented a brief overview of "minor" equipment recommended for funding in next year's budget as well as equipment which was not recommended for funding.

Council Member Capowski inquired whether Fire Department staff was proposing the purchase of one or two additional fire trucks. Chief Jones said that one truck was potentially requested in the 1998-99 budget, while another was proposed in the 2000-2001 Capital Improvements Program. He noted that the truck referenced in the CIP was a replacement for a fire truck currently in service. Council Member Foy inquired how Fire Department staff decided to locate various pieces of equipment. Chief Jones said that these determinations were largely tied to anticipated needs and existing equipment at each of the stations.

Noting that a significant potential outlay was involved, Mayor Waldorf suggested that the Council reflect on the Fire Department's request for an additional fire truck and crew. Mayor Waldorf also requested that staff prepare a report on lapsed salaries in the Police and Parks and Recreation Departments.

COUNCIL MEMBER FOY MOVED, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER PAVAO, FOR THE COUNCIL TO MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION. THE MOTION WAS ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY (9-0).

The regular meeting concluded at 8:44 p.m.

In closed session, Mr. Horton reported that Ms. Kathryn Spatz of Falls Church, Virginia, had been offered and had accepted the position of Parks and Recreation Director.

The closed session adjourned at 8:48 p.m.