

City of Mount Holly
Mount Holly City Council Work Session Meeting
Monday, May 23, 2022
Council Chambers
6:30 pm

Call to Order

Mayor Hough called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The following were present:

Mayor Bryan Hough	Brian DuPont, Asst City Manager
Mayor Pro Tem Phyllis Harris	Don Roper, Police Chief
Councilman Ivory Craig	Brian Reagan, Deputy Police Chief
Councilman Jeff Meadows	Ryan Baker, Fire Chief
Councilman David Moore	Mark Jusko, Recreation Supervisor
Councilwoman Christina Pawlish	Tony Walker, Street and Solid Waste Director
Councilwoman Lauren Shoemaker	David Johnson, City Engineer/ Director of Utilities
Miles Braswell, City Manager	Greg Beal, Planning Director
Marie Anders, City Attorney	Michelle Wood, Finance Director

Invocation

Councilman Moore led the Council, staff and attendees in prayer.

SET THE AGENDA

Mayor Hough asked for any changes to the agenda. Councilwoman Pawlish made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilman Moore seconded the motion. All Council Members voted in favor. (Motion carried)

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of an Exemption from General Statutes relating to the hiring of Architects, Engineers, and Surveyors under the requirements of the Mini-Brooks Act for civil engineering services.

Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilwoman Shoemaker seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

AGENDA

1. Presentation of a Retirement Resolution

Mayor Hough and the City Council presented Dave Johnson with a retirement resolution for his years as the City Engineer/Utilities Director.

2. Discussion of the 2022-2023 Proposed Budget and Fee Schedule

Ms. Wood explained the budget process and the approach taken by the finance staff to compile the information and department requests. Ms. Wood reviewed the proposed budget totals by fund and advised that staff is recommending no change to the tax rate. Ms. Wood explained the revenue projections and the approach taken to estimate the expenses. She explained that she asked department heads to factor in inflation when making their

requests for operational expenses. There are 14 new positions, a 7.5% COLA based on the CPI amount as of January 2022 and longevity included in the proposed budget. She advised that last year COLA was based on the March CPI but in 2022 the CPI in March was 9.4% and therefore staff decided to go with the January amount. Ms. Wood reviewed the increases to health insurance, property and liability and workman's comp insurance. She also advised that the local average for COLA increases is 5.9%. She reviewed the enterprise, E911, TDA and Powell Bill Funds. Councilman Meadows commented that due to the current state of the economy he feels that staff should have taken a more conservative approach to the budget. He feels we are facing uncharted territory with inflation on the rise and does not feel like it has been built into the budget. Councilman Meadows and Councilwoman Shoemaker did not agree with the 7.5% COLA but did suggest a 4% COLA and revisit the state of the city finances at the mid-year point and give additional COLA at that time if the economy allows. Mayor Hough went around the table and it was the consensus to apply 4% COLA as of July 1st and revisit at the any additional at the mid-year point. Mr. Braswell advised that staff took measures to include cost increases for the normal operating expenses such as chlorine, utilities, departmental supplies and vehicle purchases. Councilman Meadows further commented that he would like the employee longevity to be rolled into their salary as a 1-time payment versus the yearly payout bonus. He explained that in the long term it would benefit employees more to be able to collect yearly percentage increases on the longevity amount. There was discussion in regard to the process of this occurring and educating the employees on the process. Councilman Craig suggested an employee survey at that would allow employees to have a say in the longevity process. Mayor Hough commented that the fuel line item in the police budget did not increase from last year and asked staff to take a look at that because with the increased cost in fuel it probably needs to be increased. Councilman Meadows asked that the Mayor and Council's salary allotment be looked into every 2 years and compared to municipalities the same size to ensure they are inline with others. Councilman Meadows brought up the fact that he was the one to suggest that staff use the CPI amount as of January each year to determine the amount of COLA increases for employees. He wanted to make clear that it was only a suggestion. Mayor Hough commented that he feels that Mr. Braswell has the upper-level staffing in position to implement a merit program. Mayor Hough advised that staff would make the changes to the proposed budget and bring it back at the June meeting for approval.

CLOSED SESSION

1. Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S 143-318.11 (a) (3, 5 and 6)

Councilwoman Shoemaker made the motion to enter into Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S 143-318.11 (a)(3, 5 and 6) at 7:20 pm. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

Councilman Moore made a motion to come out of closed session and back into regular session at 8:07 pm. Councilwoman Pawlish seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion carried)

Mayor Hough advised that no action was taken during closed session.

ADJOURN

With no additional items for discussion, Mayor Hough entertained a motion to adjourn. Councilman Moore made the motion to adjourn the May 23, 2022 Council Work Session Meeting. Councilwoman Pawlish seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.