November 11, 2020

The meeting took place in Moose Hill Council Chambers at Town.

Present: Chairman John Farrell; Councilor Tom Dolan, Jim Butler and Deb Paul; Town Manager Kevin Smith; On the Phone: Vice Chairman Joe Green; Absent: Executive Assistant Kirby Brown; Assistant Town Manager Lisa Drabik

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Farrell called the Town Council meeting to order. This was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence for those who serve us both here and abroad.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Farrell thanked everyone who worked the election on Tuesday. It was a record turnout of almost 16,000 voters.

Councilor Dolan thanked all of the Veterans of Veterans Day.

Town Manager Smith presented a proclamation to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Londonderry Lions Hall.

PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Farrell stated that the Council has to review the current tax rate given by DRA.
And discussion on whether the Council wants to lower it using the Undesignated Fund Balance. Smith shared that the rate that was given is $20.20, which is up from $19.39 in 2019. The town rate is $4.75, up from $4.56; the county rate is $.86, down from $.88; the school rate is $12.66, up from $12.04; and the state education is $1.93, up from $1.91. Smith stated that the town has the opportunity before finalizing the rate with DRA is using some of the Undesignated Fund Balance to help offset the town tax rate. It is something that has been done in previous years. It is something that doesn’t have to be done, but can be done. Smith stated that the total evaluation, the net is up from 2019, the town did have a loss of $45M from the power plant in setting this year’s tax rate.

Chairman Farrell stated that the increase is approximately 4.2%. The Council discussed options using the Undesignated Fund Balance. Vice Chairman Green stated that he is present on the phone due to Covid reasons. Town Manager Smith stated that the only rate that can be fixed at this point is the towns. The school rate has been set. Councilor Paul stated that a lot of people are going to start paying on their mortgages again and she thinks the rate should be brought down to $4.50. Councilor Dolan stated that the only way that could happen is if we spend some of the Fund Balance. Councilor Paul stated that the town has had no problem spending the money on luxury items throughout the town, so she doesn’t see why it should be an issue to help people through a hard time. Town Manager Smith stated that the Fund Balance is spent on things like roadway maintenance, cemetery maintenance, GIS. Councilor Paul stated that it was spent to buy a generator that wasn’t needed. Chairman Farrell stated that all Fund Balance purchases are approved by the voters.

Chairman Farrell asked the Council what they want to do. Councilor Paul stated that she would like to give $1M back to the voters. Finance Director Campo stated that cash flow in December for the town will be an issue if we do that. If we do $1M with the big bills we have coming up in December and the fact that the tax bills are later, we could run into a cash flow issue. Councilor Paul stated that she is getting ten to twenty calls a week, fifty emails a week, from residents who are asking her what is going on and happening. Councilor Paul stated that she tells the residents things are tight. Councilor Butler stated that we have to be fiscally responsible. Whatever we do here will rollover into next year. Councilor Butler stated that he would love to give $1M back to the tax payers, but all we are going to do is kick the can back down the road. It’s a tough one and campo is warning the Council about cash flow. Councilor Paul stated that there has to be money within the budget to help these people out there that could be losing their homes. Councilor Dolan
stated that it will be discussed at Saturday’s budget workshop. Councilor Paul stated that
the lowest number that we can get it to, that the Council feels comfortable with, that is what
she would like to do.

The Council continued to discuss their options. Councilor Dolan motioned to reduce the
town portion of the tax rate by $425K. Second by Councilor Butler. Chair votes 4-0-1. Councilor Paul voted against. Chairman Farrell stated that it will reduce the tax payment
to $4.66. The percentage will be brought down to about 4%.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

NONE

APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS

NONE

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Dolan and seconded by Councilor Butler. Chair votes
5-0-0.

Notes and Tapes by: Kirby Brown  Date: 11/11/2020
Minutes Typed by: Kirby Brown  Date: 11/16/2020
Approved by:  Town Council  Date: 11/16/2020