

MINUTES

Town of Marshall Board of Alderman

Special Meeting

June 26, 2023
5:30 p.m.

Mayor Nancy Allen called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Aldermen in attendance were Billie Jean Haynie, Thomas Jablonski, and Aileen Payne, Christiaan Ramsey, and Laura Ponder Smith. Also in attendance was Town Administrator Forrest Gilliam.

Forrest Gilliam, Town Administrator, informed the Board that a copy of the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 had been on file at Town Hall and a public hearing regarding said budget had been properly noticed for June 26, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor Allen opened the public hearing regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget at 5:36 p.m.

Mr. Gilliam presented information to the Board regarding the proposed budget, developed after a series of Board work sessions. The proposed General Fund Budget is \$1,167,019 maintains the existing property tax rate while funding a \$1.50 per hour cost of living adjustment for employees, state-mandated increases to the employer retirement contribution for each employee, dash and body cameras for the Police Department, targeted salary increases for employees and departments paid significantly below the average for similar local governments, and various inflationary increases in contracted services. The proposed General Fund Budget also includes an increase in part-time salaries for the Police Department to address increased demand for service, and an increase to the contract for fire service through the Marshall Volunteer Fire Department. The proposed General Fund Budget also includes funds for the November Municipal Election as well as funds for a Primary Election in the event that the partisan municipal elections bill currently pending ultimately becomes law. The proposed General Fund Budget includes \$39,733 in Contingency to allow for unanticipated events that arise throughout the fiscal year.

The proposed Water and Sewer Fund Budget of \$854,495 includes a two percent increase to water and sewer service charges. The proposed Water and Sewer Fund Budget includes funds for the \$1.50 per hour cost of living adjustment for Water and Sewer employees, state-mandated increases to the employer retirement contribution rate for each employee, inflationary increases for various purchased water and sewer equipment, and investments in capital improvements to the water and sewer systems. The proposed Water and Sewer Fund Budget includes \$27,016 in Contingency to allow unanticipated events that arise throughout the fiscal year.

Mr. Gilliam also presented the proposed Budget Ordinance, the Proposed Ordinance to Establish Water and Sewer Fund Rates, and a list of employee pay rates that would be included as part of the budget.

There was no public comment regarding the proposed budget. Town resident Vivian Long was present and asked a few clarifying questions about the presentation, which were answered by Mr. Gilliam.

There being no additional comments from the public regarding the budget, Mayor Allen declared the public hearing closed at 5:57 p.m.

Following the close of the public hearing, final discussion took place regarding the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

Upon motion by Alderman Smith, seconded by Alderman Haynie, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the 2023-2024 Budget Ordinance (Attachment 1) and all employee rates of pay included therein.

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Upon motion by Alderman Ramsey, seconded by Alderman Jablonski, the Board voted 5-0 to approve An Ordinance to Establish Water and Sewer Rates for the Town of Marshall (Attachment 2).

Mr. Gilliam presented a draft copy of the contract for fire service with the Marshall Community Volunteer Fire Department to cover the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. The contract language is identical to past contracts but includes an increase in the contract amount of \$6,000, for a total contract amount of \$96,000. The amount will be paid in equal quarterly installments in September, December, March, and June. The amount of the contract is the equivalent of \$.08 of property tax revenue, matching the rate paid by county residents who are in the same district and are assessed a fire tax of \$.08. Discussion took place regarding the need for monthly reports from the Fire Department to be submitted as called for in the contract. Discussion also took place regarding communication with the Fire Department through the Town's appointed non-voting Fire Department Board members from the Board of Aldermen. Discussion also took place regarding the impact of the portion of the fire service district that is outside of Town limits and outside of the County's Fire Tax district. This area of the county receives service from the Fire Department but does not pay a fire tax. This shifts the cost burden for providing the service to residents of the Town as well as the County residents who are in the taxed portion of the district. The Fire Department has stated in the past that they are working with the County to address this issue. Mr. Gilliam will work in the coming months to improve the flow of information coming from the Fire Department in order for the Town to have a full understanding of current and long-term issues that impact the Fire Department and the continuation of quality fire service protection for Town residents.

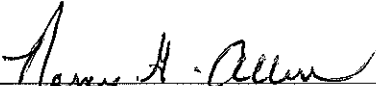
Upon motion by Alderman Haynie, seconded by Alderman Jablonski, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Contract with the Marshall Community Volunteer Fire Department (Attachment 3) covering the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

Upon motion by Alderman Ramsey, seconded by Alderman Haynie, the Board voted 5-0 to enter into closed session for the purposes of Personnel.

Upon motion by Alderman Ramsey, seconded by Alderman Haynie, the Board voted 5-0 to return to open session.

Upon motion by Alderman Jablonski, seconded by Alderman Smith, the Board voted 5-0 to employ Devin Nash in the position of Maintenance Worker, at a pay rate of \$20.50 per hour, effective July 10, 2023.

Upon motion by Alderman Payne, seconded by Alderman Ramsey, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn at 6:22 p.m.



Nancy Allen, Mayor



Forrest Gilliam, Town Administrator