

**Public Hearing – FY Budget 2005-2006
June 23, 2005**

Council President Donna Turner convened the Public Hearing for the Fiscal Year Budget 2005-2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the first floor meeting room of the Goodwill Fire Company. Council Vice-President Mary McCarthy, Member Norman Pinder, Royden Powell, Town Manager, Stephen Kehoe, Town Attorney and Jane Saulsbury, Administrative Aide were also in attendance.

Mrs. Turner welcomed citizens and guests to the public hearing.

The first order of business was the first reading of Ordinance O-03-05, concerning compensation of classified employees of the Town of Centreville which was read for the record by Mr. Powell. The salary schedule will become effective July 1, 2005.

Proceeding with the hearing, Mrs. Turner asked Mrs. Saulsbury to read the certification of the advertisement in the June 10th and June 17th editions of the Star Democrat newspaper. The advertisement was read for the record.

The hearing was turned over to Mr. Powell who reviewed the proposed budget for 2005-2006, explaining the anticipated revenues and expenditures in a slide presentation and discussion. The proposed real property tax rate is \$0.48 per \$100 of assessment. It was noted that in order to have the budget adopted by July 1, 2005, Ordinance No. 04-05 is presented for approval and adoption as emergency legislation, allowable under Town Charter, Article II, Section 209.

The following improvements and recommended measures were discussed: (1) A \$200 arsenic assessment is being collected for each North Brook building permit to implement the arsenic treatment facility; (2) The Inflow and Infiltration Study will continue to assess areas most needing replacement of water and sewer lines; (3) It is proposed to pave Front Street, Chesterfield Avenue, Homewood, Draper Lane and Ridgeview Avenue; (4) Consideration will be given to the hiring of the following personnel: a director for the Public Works Department, an administrative specialist to assist with grants and bids, two additional police officers, two additional public works employees, a supervisor for the Water Department.

Mr. Powell summarized the proposed budget for 2005-2006 with a discussion of the Capital Budget on page 15, and then opened the hearing for public discussion.

Citizen Comment

Mrs. Mary Margaret Goodwin asked if the "Railroad Ave Land Acquisition" included the old railroad building on Pennsylvania Avenue and would be large enough to use for Town meetings if renovated. The building is included and it is thought it would be useful for meetings.

Mr. Dick Meyers, WCTR, asked if some salaries are taken from more than one department. Mr. Powell explained how that is done inasmuch as employees do work in and for a number of different departments. Mr. Dan Worth asked if this is an estimate or percentage rather than a coding system. Mr. Sveinn Storm asked if it just a guess. Mr. Powell advised it is a planning tool more than anything and not a guess, but an estimate.

Mr. Storm asked why the cost of meter replacement is so high (n page 13, column 04/05 YTD) if, in fact, there hasn't been a problem with the new meters. Mr. Powell explained that this figure is the amount of money spent to purchase meters for new homes and for all the older homes that are now on meters. He stated he could "count on one hand" the number of meters that have been replaced because they were faulty.

Mr. Storm asked for an explanation of the high sludge costs since 7/1/04. It was explained that hauling of sludge began in April of 2004 and the cost included cleaning out the old digester.

Mr. Worth asked by Planning and Zoning Expenditures jumped so much. It was explained that the increase resulted from U.R.S. inspection and review fees, however, developers are then billed for the costs pertinent to their projects.

Mr. Storm continued with a list of concerns as follows: (1) the legal fees for 2004 were extremely high. Does the Town anticipate these legal fees to remain high? Mr. Powell responded, "hopefully not." Mr. Storm asked how much of those fees were relative to Bob Griffith and the law firm of Piper Rudnick. Mr. Powell referred him to legal fees on page 13 of the proposed budget. (2) How much money was spent for the trees at Tanyard Farm? Mr. Powell explained the plantings, the county requirements for a buffer and the contingency allowance. Bayberry meets the County requirement; (3) how is the Council addressing suggestions made by the auditor in the 2004 audit? Mr. Powell replied that checks and balances are being initiated. (4) Is the 48% of the proposed budget designated to water and sewer expenses in line with "normal Municipal expenditures?" Mr. Powell reiterated the costs that go towards the compilation of that percentage. (5) What will be the responsibilities of the Water Supervisor? This person will read water meters, be in charge of water distribution and manholes. Mr. Crossley will focus on streets, maintenance of the cemetery and of town parks and recreational areas.

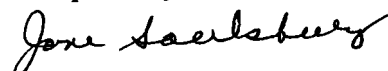
Mr. Konrad Surowiec, Record Observer staff writer, asked how many employees are currently employed by the Town of Centreville. There are nineteen full time employees, including those who are hired for summer employment.

In closing Council remarks, Mrs. McCarthy said she was pleased that the Town employees will now have a competitive salary and that road improvements will begin. She was, however, disappointed that the Town is not providing curbside recycling, nor is she comfortable with suspending the 209 rule and adopting the budget as emergency legislation. Mrs. Turner commented that the County is willing to assist the Town's residents with recycling by placing additional igloos and added that it is important to have a working budget adopted by July 1st. Mr. Pinder noted that the contract with Maryland Environmental Service expires in October, at which time the Town can revisit the operation of the wastewater treatment plant.

It was moved and seconded by Mr. Pinder and Mrs. Turner, respectively to accept the Budget Ordinance No. 04-05 and adopt the budget for 2005-2006 as presented. Mr. Pinder and Mrs. Turner voted in favor of the motion and McCarthy voted against it. The majority being in favor, the motion carried.

Motion to Adjourn: There being nothing further to discuss, the public hearing was adjourned at 8:45 p.m., by motion and second of Mr. Pinder and Mrs. McCarthy, respectively, and by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted


Jane Saulsbury, Admin. Aide

[Correction of minutes: Mrs. McCarthy's concerns with the budget were as follows: (1) high amount allocated WWTP operations; (2) percentage increase in several departments.