

**River Bend Town Council**  
**Budget Workshop Minutes**  
**May 4, 2021**  
**River Bend Town Hall**  
**4:00 P.M.**

Present Council Members:	Mayor John Kirkland Don Fogle Brian Leonard Barbara Maurer – remotely via phone Buddy Sheffield Bud Van Slyke
Town Manager:	Delane Jackson
Police Chief:	Sean Joll

The Mayor called the meeting back to order at 4:00 p.m. The meeting began with a presentation by the Police Chief about the police department. That was followed by a detailed discussion of the following departments: recreation and special events, park and CAC, emergency services, animal control, wetlands and waterways, leaf and limb, planning and zoning and then discussions about general fund revenues and fund balance in the general fund.

During the meeting Councilman Leonard asked if the body cameras in the proposed police budget would be purchased early or delayed. The Manager stated that if the Council wanted them purchased early, they could be ordered on July 1. Councilman Fogle stated he would like for them to be purchased as soon as possible. Councilman Leonard also asked if code enforcement action only took place if a resident complained. He said that he had been asked by residents why the codes were not being enforced. The Manager explained that Allison, police officers and he often initiated code enforcement without ever hearing about the violation from a citizen. Councilman Leonard stated that he was aware of an RV that had been parked in violation of the ordinances for several weeks. The Manager explained the often time-consuming legal process that was involved in official code enforcement actions. Councilman Fogle stated that he thought Allison was just trying to be nice while conducting code enforcement and that he thought that was a good thing.

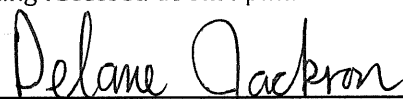
During the revenue discussions, the Manager stated that the local sales tax revenues had been much better than anticipated in FY20-21 and that COVID had not impacted those revenues nearly as much as had been expected statewide. Councilman Leonard stated that it appears that many state revenues may be declining and are not as reliable. He stated that in the future the Town may need to consider looking at other ways to generate revenue. The Manager stated that the next property revaluation was scheduled to become effective as of January 1, 2022 and that the five-year forecast, which would be discussed later, did not include a tax rate reduction after the revaluation. There was a discussion about the declining Powell Bill revenue and how that impacted the Town's ability to fund street paving.

The Manager ended the session with several slides that showed the recent history and projections for fund balance in the general fund. He noted that due to the \$1,000,000 BUS project, the Town's fund balance had dipped below the 50% goal during FY20. He noted the fund balance projection for year-ending 2021 was for it to return to 57% and the proposal for year-ending 2022 was 55%. There was a lengthy discussion about how the last two fiscal years were unusual due to the BUS project and continuing recovery from Hurricane Florence and FEMA funded projects related to Hurricane Florence.

The Manager explained that increased spending due to all of these factors had a negative impact on the Town's usually very high fund balance. He explained how the fund balance was stated as a percentage of the general fund expenditures. Councilman Sheffield stated that the best way to rebuild fund balance was to not do anymore big capital projects. There was a general agreement that the lower fund balance for the next few years was a concern, but the Council was also aware of the main reasons for the lower fund balance.

The Manager stated that the BUS project was complete and that all FEMA projects should be completed during the current fiscal year and that would get spending associated with those out of our budget process. He pointed out that the Council had previously had discussions about a goal of keeping \$1,000,000 in fund balance. He said that he thought \$2,000,000 was a more reasonable goal. He stated he felt that way because we quickly spent \$1,000,000 after Hurricane Florence and that having \$2,000,000 would allow us to spend \$1,000,000 on emergency response and still have \$1,000,000 for other things. The Council agreed to continue to closely monitor fund balance and take appropriate action as needed in the future to keep it stable.

With no further questions, Councilman Sheffield motioned to recess the meeting until May 11, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting recessed at 6:14 p.m.



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Delane Jackson  
Town Manager