



TOWN OF RIVER BEND

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To: Department Heads and Advisory Board Chairs
Cc: Mayor Kirkland and Members of Council
From: Delane Jackson, Town Manager/Budget Officer
Date: January 10, 2024
Re: FY 2024-25 Budget

Hard to believe, but it is budget season again. This annual memo officially begins the budget process. As you know, I will be working with you and the Council on the budget this year. Each year's budget process presents new and interesting challenges and opportunities. This will be my 26th municipal budget preparation process. After all these years, I still learn something new with each budget. I always want to improve the budget process. This year's budget process should be equally interesting and educational. The Council is scheduled to meet for a budget "Kick-off" on January 18th to discuss their priorities for the upcoming budget and to set the calendar for the budget sessions. Once the Council has established the town's priorities for the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget, I can begin crafting my budget recommendation to meet those goals.

Similar to what has been done for many years, I expect that we will discuss budget items during a series of budget sessions beginning in late April and finishing in May. This schedule will give us time to see what the state will be doing with their budget and it will give us time to see how the numbers (i.e. property values, sales tax revenue, inflation, etc.) are going to work out. The Council is tentatively scheduled to conduct a public hearing on and adopt the budget in June. This will basically be a repeat of the schedule we followed last year.

As the Town's Budget Officer, I am required by law to submit a balanced budget recommendation, along with a budget message, to the Council no later than June 1st. Once I present my recommendation to the Council, the Council can then make any changes that they believe are prudent. The value of our budget sessions are dependent upon the quality of the information that you provide to me and that I pass along to the Council for their consideration.

Now is the time to begin planning for this process and making decisions regarding the needs of your operational areas or advisory board functions. Taking time now to obtain good cost projections, quotes, and estimates will save time during the budget process and as it is implemented. In the past, I have always referred to this as the "wish list" part of the process. This part is where each of you makes your list of needs and requests. I realize that there is often a difference between needs and requests. I also realize that each of you are naturally inclined to be more concerned or focused on your department or board than you are with other areas of the town. However, I need you to realize that it is my job and the Council's job to

make recommendations and final budget decisions based on the overall needs of the town, not just a single department or Advisory Board.

In the past, I have said- Ask for anything you want but do not take it personally if your request is not recommended by me or approved by the Council. Again, this year as economic uncertainty and on-going wars continues, I request that you look at ways to trim your department and keep your requests to a minimum or even reduce it. I am conservative with my revenue projections and that has a direct impact on my expenditure recommendations. My philosophy has always been that I would rather end the fiscal year with a surplus and wonder what to do with it, rather than ending the year with a deficit and wonder how to cover it. This year, I expect that I will be equally conservative in the budget process.

For new (emphasis on new) operational and equipment items, you will need to complete a Budget Request Form (copy attached) describing the project, service, or equipment being requested. This form asks for a description of the project and how it relates to other expenses within the department and fund. It is critical that we think about the impact new programs and purchases have on all areas of the budget. The more information you can include, the more fully I will understand the request and be able to provide justification to the Council. If you submit a budget request form, I encourage you to use an electronic version to populate the fields. In the past, I have been unable to read the handwriting on some of the submissions. The form also asks you to anticipate the impact of not funding the requested project, service or equipment. We need to know what internal or external service impact will be caused if the request is not included in the approved budget. *Note- I expect new programs/equipment to be very unlikely this year.*

During this budget cycle, and probably the next two, we will be undertaking massive grant-funded infrastructure projects. My expectation is for those projects to reduce or even eliminate some normal budgetary funding. Due to the demands of these projects, I also hope to expedite the budget process by reducing the amount of non-essential background information that is provided to Council for minor items.

The budget process that has evolved over the past several years in River Bend is transparent, thorough and deliberate. However, I will add that in the final analysis, budgets are simply **predictions**. Most revenues and expenditures are **not guaranteed**. They can be, and often are, impacted by circumstances beyond our control (i.e. the economy, property value, inflation, war, national and state politics, etc.). That is why we/YOU need to be vigilant during the current fiscal year to make sure that we/YOU do not overspend our appropriations. We are just a little past halfway in the FY 2023-24 budget process and there is still plenty of time for unexpected expenditures to arise and/or expected revenues to fall short. As you know, if revenues are lower than expected, that means expenditures must be reduced during the budget year. Now is a good time for each of you to examine the current budget for your department and make sure that you are on the proper budget course for FY 2023-24. I highly recommend that you identify remaining purchases/expenses in your current budget that can be eliminated, just in case it becomes necessary. I also highly recommend that you delay making any non-essential purchases until later in the current fiscal year. This delay will allow us to make sure that revenues are in place to cover any expenditures.

I look forward to working with you and the elected leaders throughout this process as we produce a responsive and accurate budget for FY 2024-25. All budget request forms are due to me by **February 19, 2024**. As always, earlier is better. If you need to discuss a budget issue/item with me, please schedule an appointment to do so. If you represent an Advisory Board and simply want to repeat your funding level from the current year, just send me an email that says- REPEAT.



Town of River Bend Fiscal Year 2024-25



January 18, 2024

Town of River Bend

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Budget Kick-Off

AGENDA

1. Opening Remarks from Mayor
2. Remarks from Manager/Budget Officer
3. Discussion of Vision Statement-Priorities
4. Discussion of Budget Workshop Schedule & Budget Calendar
5. Preview Proposed Workshop Agendas
6. Preview Budget Brochure
7. Comments from Council

Please Turn Off Your
Cell Phones

Comments From Mayor- John Kirkland



NORMAL YEAR

The Council's work in developing the annual budget is the most important work that the Council performs on an annual basis. The development of the budget under the Council-Manager form of government has specific direction in the North Carolina General Statutes. Following that direction, the Manager is designated as the Budget Officer. In that role, he prepares a proposed budget and presents it to the Council for consideration and revision as they may direct, in accordance with the North Carolina Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

The Council must hold a public hearing on the proposed budget. That hearing is tentatively scheduled for the June work session and public comments are received. The tentative schedule then is to vote on the adoption of the FY 2024-2025 budget at the June Council Meeting. This approach meets all the mandates of General Statutes. This process has worked well for a number of years and should be followed again this year.

SPECIAL YEAR

THE BUDGET PROCESS AND THE MANAGER'S WORKLOAD

The budget drafting places a number of requirements that take time from the Manager's normal workload. I will mention several of those project demands:

1. During the budget year 2023-2024 Manager Jackson was able to obtain several multimillion-dollar grants. The agencies that awarded those grants have specific demands as to what the grant money will fund. Also, the funding agencies have timelines that must be met. There is no manner in which the funding can be shifted to fund other projects. Also, those major projects will involve his time for project specification preparation, project bidding and award, agency correspondence, near-daily contact with project superintendent during the construction period, and more.
2. Funds available for newly-approved, major town-funded projects must be funded from the annual, normal funding sources, which are limited.
3. The Manager will need to spend time working up estimates for any projects that the Council would like to accomplish in the coming budget year. This work is in addition to his supervising the Town staff as they perform the tasks associated with daily operations, his other normal duties, and the substantive, aforementioned grant-related work.

4. During the course of a fiscal year the Manager has authority to make a limited shift in funding within the several departments in order to meet arising, unanticipated needs. He does not have authority to take on new (surprise) major projects unless the Council provides a new source of funding for such an added project. We should avoid “surprise” projects, especially during these very busy and demanding times.

It is very important that Council and citizens understand that the Manager does not print money and that the 1 July approved budget is not very flexible for repositioning from the approved projects.

We have been very fortunate to be able to make significant infrastructure improvements with grant funding. While a blessing, its administration exacts a toll on the Manager and his staff. Let us not unnecessarily add to these demands.

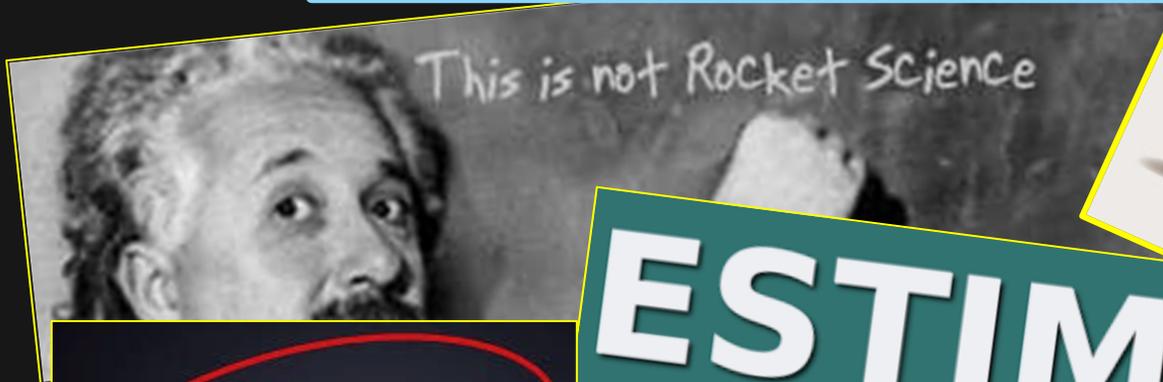
John Kirkland, Mayor

Comments from Manager/Budget Officer



Budgets are predictions and are subject to change especially as long as the General Assembly is in session.

All of these are components of our budget process



AVERAGE

ESTIMATE

Predictions

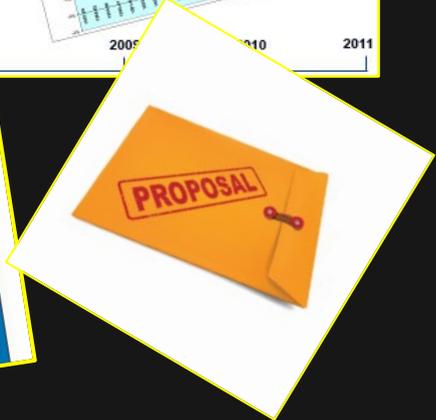


HISTORICAL DATA

Forecast



trends



INDUCTIVE REASONING
AND CONJECTURE

Financial and Budgetary Policies

I. Introduction

The Town of River Bend maintains comprehensive financial policies covering a broad range of the elements of the Town's financial plans and financial systems that underlay the management of overall financial resources. These policies have major objectives to be achieved that include:

1. To link long-term financial planning with short-term daily operations and decision-making.
2. To maintain and improve the Town's financial position.
3. To maintain and improve the Town's credit ratings by meeting or exceeding the requirements of rating agencies through sound financial policies.
4. To maintain and increase investor confidence in the Town and to provide credibility to the citizens of the Town regarding financial operations.
5. To comply with the North Carolina Budget and Fiscal Control Act and the policies of the North Carolina Local Government Commission (the "LGC").
6. To effectively conduct asset-liability management of the Town's balance sheet.

II. Operating Budget

1. The Town's Annual Budget Ordinance will be balanced in accordance with the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act (G.S. 159-8(a)).
2. The Town's Annual Budget Ordinance will be adopted, by fund and department, by each July 1 (G.S. 159-13(a)).
3. In order to force a higher level of planning throughout all levels of Town government, the annual budget process will focus on future needs through a Capital Improvements Plan, as discussed later in this document.
4. The annual budget process will consist of a series of public meetings where Council and staff discuss needs in relation to the Town's mission statement, and Council's adopted priorities.

III. Revenue Policy

1. Ad Valorem Tax – As provided by the North Carolina Budget and Fiscal Control Act, estimated revenue from the Ad Valorem Tax levy will be budgeted as follows:

Assessed valuation will be provided by the Craven County Tax Assessor

Town of River Bend, NC Financial and Budgetary Policies



Effective May 17, 2018

Some North Carolina Law Concerning Budget Preparation

NCGS 160A-148 Powers and Duties of Manager

(5) He shall prepare and submit the annual budget and capital program to the Council

Manager's
Role

159.11 Budget and Fiscal Control Act

- (a)..... the budget shall be balanced.
- (b) The budget, together with a budget message, shall be submitted to the governing board no later than June 1.

Council's
Role

159-13

- (a) Not earlier than 10 days after the day the budget is presented to the board and not later than July 1, the governing board shall adopt a budget ordinance making appropriations and levying taxes for the budget year in such sums as the board may consider sufficient and proper, whether greater or less than the sums recommended in the budget.

Town of River Bend

Mayor and Town Council Priorities as approved for Fiscal Year 2023-24



Proposed Budget Workshop Calendar

APRIL 2024

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |



MAY 2024

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |



www.free-printable-calendar.com



= NCLM Conference in Winston-Salem



= scheduled workshop date



= extra workshop date if necessary

Other Important Proposed Budget Dates

| MAY 2024 | | | | | | |
|----------|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | X 30 | 31 | |

May 30- Budget Message &
Proposed Budget Released

June 13 - Budget Public Hearing

These dates are subject to change, but the budget must be adopted by July 1

| JUNE 2024 | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | X 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | X 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | | 29 |
| 30 | | | | | | |

June 20- Budget Adoption

Proposed Agenda Items

APRIL 30, 2024

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

- Pay Plan Review
- Retirement / 401K / LESA
- Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)

LABOR ALLOCATIONS AMONG DEPARTMENTS & FUNDS

- Staffing Projections
- Allocation Table

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

- General Fund
- Vehicle Replacement Plan
- Information Technology Replacement Plan

ELECTRIC UTILITIES AND FUEL PRICES

GENERAL FUND DEPARTMENTS

GOVERNING BODY

- Association Dues, Training, Contributions

ADMINISTRATION

- Property and Liability Insurance, Training, Association Dues

FINANCE

- Information Technology

TAX LISTING

- County Provided Services, Collection Projections, Fees

LEGAL SERVICES

- Attorney

ELECTIONS

STREET MAINTENANCE

- Roadway Improvement Plan

STORM WATER MAINTENANCE

- Prioritized Drainage Concerns
- Scheduled Maintenance

PUBLIC WORKS

- Capital Outlay

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

- Mowing and Landscaping Contract
- Building Maintenance

MAY 2, 2024

GENERAL FUND DEPARTMENTS CONTINUED

POLICE

- Community Watch, Fuel, LESA, Capital Outlay

RECREATION AND SPECIAL EVENTS

- July 4th Plans, Recreation Programs

PARKS AND CAC

- Parks, Community Appearance Commission Projects, Community Organic Garden

EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Contingency Funding
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

ANIMAL CONTROL

WETLANDS & WATERWAYS

- Pond and Canal Maintenance
- Environment and Waterways Advisory Board

LEAF & LIMB AND SOLID WASTE

- Contract Costs

PLANNING AND ZONING

GENERAL FUND—REVENUE/ EXPENSE

GENERAL FUND—FUND BALANCE

MAY 7, 2024

ENTERPRISE FUND DEPARTMENTS

WATER AND SEWER FUND CASH LEVELS

- Debt Service
- Capital Reserve Funds
- Capital Improvement Plan/ Water and Sewer

continued

WATER FUND DEPARTMENTS

- Administration
- Water Supply & Treatment
- Water Distribution

SEWER FUND DEPARTMENTS

- Administration
- Sewer Collection
- Sewer Treatment

UTILITY FINANCIAL MODEL

- Rate History
- Consumption Trends
- Revenue & Expense—Cash Balances
- Rate Scenarios

WATER AND SEWER— REVENUE/EXPENSE

MAY 9 2024

TAX RATES, UTILITY RATES AND OTHER FEES

- Ad Valorem Tax Rate
- Utility Rates and Fees
- Schedule of Rates and Fees

MAY 13, 2024

MEET IF NECESSARY

MAY 16, 2024

OVERVIEW

DRAFT-BUDGET MESSAGE, ORDINANCE and SCHEDULE OF FEES



Proposed Budget Brochure

Our Budget Preparation Process

The Town of River Bend employs a progressive and transparent budget development process that allows for significant participation from elected officials, advisory boards, staff, and the public. This tentative schedule of budget workshops outlines the dates of these sessions and the proposed topics to be discussed during each session.

While the Town Council and staff do their best to adhere to the printed schedule, there are times when deviation is necessary in order to accommodate adequate discussion of items scheduled for consideration. So, if time or information does not allow for complete discussion of a scheduled item, that item may be taken up at the beginning of the next session.

The Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget Public Hearing is Tentatively set for Thursday, June 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Documents pertaining to the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget preparation will be posted on the Town's webpage prior to each budget workshop. All budget related documents shall remain as draft and subject to change until the Budget Ordinance is officially adopted by the Town Council.

Mayor and Town Council

Priorities for Fiscal Year 2024-25

"It's all about resources"

Continue to provide a safe, dynamic, and attractive community for people of all ages, and continue to address the changing demographic composition of the Town.

Continue to provide safe drinking water and quality treatment of wastewater through maintenance of the current systems and continued prudent fiscal management of the utilities.

Continue to operate wastewater treatment facilities to maintain regulatory compliance and serve the current and future needs of the Town.

Continue to work with advisory boards as a means to encourage citizen participation in Town government.

Continue to be good stewards of the natural environment through planned stormwater and floodplain management efforts.

Continue to cooperate regionally and with other municipalities and, where appropriate, share ideas and resources.

Maintain a commitment to the Council—Manager form of government, and to support an adequate and well-trained staff to serve the current and future needs of the community.

Continue to employ sound fiscal management practices to ensure the long-term financial viability of the Town.

Maintain a visionary posture, acknowledging that change is inevitable.

Town of River Bend



Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget Preparation Workshops

All Budget Workshops will begin at 4:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Dates & times are tentative and may change if necessary.

Town of River Bend
45 Shoreline Drive
River Bend, NC 28562
252-638-3870

On the Internet at: www.riverbendnc.org

Public Comments



Mayor & Council Comments



Town of River Bend

Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Kick Off



All budget work sessions are open to the public and allow opportunity for public input. Come join us!


**KEEP
CALM
AND
COME TO THE
MEETING**