

**Town of Indian Trail**  
**Minutes of Town Council**  
**February 28, 2009**  
**Civic Building**  
**9:00 A.M.**

The following members of the governing body were present:

Mayor: John J. Quinn

Council Members: Gary D'Onofrio, Jeff L. Goodall, Shirley Howe, John Hullinger, Dan Schallenkamp

Staff Members: Town Manager Ed Humphries, Town Clerk Peggy Piontek, Planning Director Shelley DeHart, Town Engineer Scott Kaufhold, Finance Officer Marsha Sutton, Tax Collector Janice Cook, and Assistant to the Town Manager Miriam Lowery.

**CALL TO ORDER**

**THE BUDGET AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Mr. Humphries introduced the Finance Officer Marsha Sutton.

Finance Officer Marsha Sutton presented to Council that she was directed to take the Finance Department to the next level, requiring her to assess where the department currently was. Ms. Sutton explained the duties and challenges of her following the Town Manager's direction. She expressed her pride in her assistant Ruth Roberts and how she has been able to fulfill Ms. Sutton's needs as a Financial Assistant. Ms. Sutton explained that she feels the Finance Officer information that is provided to Council should be met to with accuracy, timely and transparent. She has been working very closely with Ms. Roberts to train her to become Ms. Sutton's assistant.

Ms. Sutton explained some of the matters that she has inherited, such as the accounts being maintained on a cash basis. This means at the end of the year the auditors come in and suggest entries to be made. She explained that she has gone through the general ledger to insure everything is accurate. She has met with the Department Heads about their particular area of financial information. She will meet with them once a month to discuss whether they are within budget. She expressed her

appreciation to Mr. Humphries for hiring her. Ms. Sutton advised she has enjoyed working with the Department Heads; it is her belief that they are doing a great job and it is her hope to add to the overall success of the things they have already started. She believes that accurate and timely numbers will be of assistance to them.

Budget vs. Actual report can be run at any time. It is a system report and can be given to them at any time. She would like to provide this information to Council in their packets for the first meeting of the month or if Council feels they need it more often it can be added to the weekly report. As a government entity, we are required to use purchase orders and encumber funds. These encumbered funds become a legal liability to the town until it is released by the department head. This information should also be included in the report. The year to date report shown does not include encumbrances. Some reports have been given out showing month to date; these do not include encumbrances. To ensure the total obligations of the department or the town the encumbrances should be considered.

Mayor Quinn requested that he get a report that not only shows the encumbrances, but also each line item and how much was spent for it. Ms. Sutton explained that it would be account history, it can be run at any time, but from July 1 it would be a very lengthy report. She informed Council that she can print off information for a particular account.

Mr. Hullinger inquired about the Beer and Wine tax and is it a one time payment. Ms. Sutton replied yes. She explained a little of how we receive it much later than the actual occurrence.

Mayor Quinn inquired if the sales and use tax was up significantly from previous years. Ms. Sutton replied yes it was. In the past it looked as if it was based on a flat rate; she will work on developing a five year history to use. That information will come later in her report.

Ms. Sutton explained the reports in the packets. This shows what is actually in each account. She advised that there are no purchase orders reflected on that report; as the software we have does not allow that to appear on the history report.

Ms. Sutton feels we need an updated Citipak or a new financial software product. She wanted to make Council aware that this may be something that will be coming up on the horizon. The current system is sufficient for the next year, but will need to be considered in the future. If information is needed for a specific department, this is available also; just ask for a report that shows the encumbrances for that department.

Ms. Sutton explained the Balance Sheet. This gives you exactly what it says. This report can be pulled at any time. She also explained the Cash Account Report. This report provides you with the information on cash accounts, who we have accounts with and the balance on each account. She briefed Council regarding the specialty reports current and in development, the Sales and Use Tax Revenue. We are currently meeting our numbers but this is only through December. She explained the many different specialty reports that can be created.

Law Enforcement Budget and actual cost to date was explained by Ms. Sutton.

Conversation pursued with Mayor Quinn and Ms. Sutton pertaining to the expenses on this budget item. Ms. Sutton pointed out there were some changes to the salaries since the budget was established.

Mr. Humphries confirmed that a \$190,000 match was budgeted for the Highway Safety grant. He explained that because the additional officers didn't come on line until after budgeting, that amount changed to \$240,000. Conversation pursued about the Grant budget item.

Ms. Sutton explained that the Projection Reports are used to look at how the Powell Bill, Stormwater, and Fund Balance may look on June 30.

Ms. Sutton explained the Powell Bill Report, the Stormwater Report and the General Fund Balance report. She explained that she works on the financial figures with the department heads for the needs within their departments. Ms. Sutton advised she plans on pulling the Powell Bill Funds out the General Fund account.

There was discussion about the required amount needed in the Fund Balance.

There was discussion about concerns of the State focusing on our Powell Bill Funds.

Ms. Sutton explained about views of Fund Balance from bonding companies.

Ms. Sutton reviewed the tentative Budget calendar and asked for feedback from Council if the dates were not workable.

Councilmember Schallenkamp entered the meeting.

### **COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF "WANTS & NEEDS">Survey and HOA Forum**

Mr. Humphries explained that the rest of the meeting will consist of a review of the Town survey and HOA forum and then recommendations will be made by staff concerning needs for the next year and then discussion of the priorities of those needs.

Mr. Humphries brought Council's attention to the survey they have been given out and to the HOA information included in the packet. This survey is a result of Council's decision last year to have an understanding of what the residents feel they may need or desire. He gave brief instructions on how to read the survey and pointed out a few high points. For example, on one table it indicates that town aspects important to residents are (1) road improvements; (2) long range planning for development and (3) lower taxes. Mr. Humphries feels it would be a good idea to conduct a survey every few years because they can be read differently. We need to look at how the questions were asked versus the choices we gave to them. Staff is looking at the results with great interest; maybe we need to rechannel information according to information we have received.

### **DEPARTMENT PROPOSED ACTIONS**

a. Administration

Mr. Humphries proposed the remodeling of the administration building after the deputies have moved into the old planning building. The estimates should be included in the budget process.

Mr. Humphries would like to plan to offer our citizens a second recycle bin. This would be to our advantage in two areas; it does help with the tonnage at the land fill that we pay for and it also is just a good thing to do environmentally. The costs would be paid from the Solid Waste Disposal Tax which we receive each month in the amount of \$1,000.00.

Councilmember D'Onofrio suggested we should address all sanitation issues and be prepared when they come.

b. Planning

Ms. DeHart advised she is using the town survey and HOA forum to determine what the citizens and businesses need or want for the upcoming year. The largest constraint to the Planning Department is the economy and the lack of water and sewer in Union County. She compared the top ten issues for both the citizens and businesses. The main issues for citizens were: road improvements, long-term planning for development, lower taxes, stricter regulations on development, economic development, more activities for youth, greenways/parks, sidewalks, recreation facilities, more activities for seniors, more activities for adults, more community events, commercial development, more services and public transportation in that order. The businesses top issues were: lower taxes, road improvements, long-term planning for development, economic development, commercial development, public transportation, more activities for youth, more community events, more services, recycling, more activities for adults more activities for seniors, sidewalks, greenways/parks and recreation facilities in that order. She is also taking into consideration the comments from the HOA Forum. The issues commented on were: communication, streets and transportation, public safety, code enforcement and town services.

Ms. DeHart is looking at ways the Planning Department can enhance road improvements, economic development, parks and greenways, community outreach, branding, grants and ordinances.

Ms. DeHart would like to pursue a general obligation bond for Old Monroe Road. In 2007 it was rated our number one through the Transportation Committee at that time. Funding allocated is a CMAQ grant and \$4 million on the TIP for environmental and planning. Mr. Kaufhold will speak later regarding this. Counting allocated money, funding is still short by approximately \$27 million. The Town also receives Powell Bill funds which is about \$600,000 annually and we also have allocated .02 cents in revenue for road improvements which currently amounts to about \$566,000. Based on information Ms. DeHart has received, the Town could pursue a General Obligation Bond. Further information is included in the council members' information packets.

General Obligation Bonds can be used on street and sidewalk projects. It does require voter approval, local government council approval and bond council approval. It is in our favor that

in the survey, road improvements were a major concern of both residents and businesses. She briefly reiterated the possible funding sources. In order to pursue the GOB the Town would need to decide on a design/cost estimate, coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions, obtain the approval of both the Local Government Council and the Bond Council and obtain voter approval.

Ms. Sutton stated that the Bond Council will help guide the Town through the program; the LGC will approve whether the Town is fiscally sound to pursue this and we would also need to get a rating for the bonds. It is important to get a high rating in order to sell the bonds. This must be planned well in advance, it is a process that will take a while. The Town can only spend the funds on projects that the voters approve.

Councilmember D'Onofrio asked Ms. DeHart to say for the record that the reason we would be considering this route is because of the timeline we are looking at otherwise for Old Monroe Road. Ms. DeHart provided a brief history of this road, advising that it did not have approved funding allocated towards any improvement of this project until about 2007. Councilmember D'Onofrio for the record asked where this was on the TIP. Mr. Kaufhold advised 2013.

Ms. DeHart advised she has looked at Economic Development as two parts, not only addressing Economic Development, but also long term planning for development as this goes hand-in-hand. Pros for this issue are: our location, the amount of available land, the existing non-residential units available and the resource component of Union County Partners for Progress. The cons aspects are: the current economy, the lack of water and sewer availability and the uncertainty of the alignment of Monroe Connector.

To start with Economic Development, Ms. DeHart feels we should reach out to current businesses and possibly initiate a website directory of all Indian Trail businesses. We could also research incentive programs for job retention and small business expansions. She feels the Town should take a stronger effort in assisting and attracting new business in Indian Trail. Union County Partners for Progress can play a role in assisting the Town in this endeavor by helping us to build a page on our website. The Town has the ability display maps on the website to identify every commercial center within Indian Trail and possibly provide links to the contacts for those locations. This would become a local aide to the local chamber and the Union County Partners for Progress.

Ms. DeHart touched briefly on the proposed Business Improvement District, which is also referred as a Municipal Service District. It appears that two areas within the Town that may qualify; Highway 74 -transit-oriented development project and Downtown revitalization. Generally the tax rates within the districts are higher than other areas. The extra generated income would be applied to the project that is implemented in that area. There was continued general discussion on the BID process.

Ms. DeHart addressed Parks & Greenways. The Town is currently working on a Parks Master Plan. This plan should consist of an inventory within existing developments; these will be mapped to have an idea where neighborhood parks are throughout the town. Jason Mann is taking the lead on the Carolina Thread Trail in western Union County. The Town will apply for

a grant which all the jurisdictions in western Union County will partner on this planning grant. A program is being proposed to take an inventory of any pedestrian paths or greenways within existing developments. The Town could possibly work with the HOAs in the development of this program. If the Council is open to it, staff would like to pursue grants to support the farmer's market and for clean water demonstrations. Community outreach is very important citing the Town newsletter and the planning newsletter. Our HOA/community leaders want more information and suggestions have been made to possibly hold an annual meeting. Staff's goal is to reach out to residents to provide more information to citizens and conduct neighborhood assessments and possibly implement neighborhood programs to enhance their areas. Staff is also conducting a Stormwater Outreach Program to try to increase the residents' knowledge of stormwater.

We would like to proceed with branding efforts by starting to brand the villages and link the branding efforts with the Comprehensive Plan. Something simple like using the idea of the streetlight signs identifying the Hwy. 74 business corridor could do a lot for that area. This can drive home the sense of community identity. We could also use branding efforts to support national athletic events held in the area and also in support of the Indian Trail Athletic Association.

Ms. DeHart would like to Council, when considering the prioritization of projects, to consider investigating a General Obligation Bond for Old Monroe Road and to also allow staff to pursue Business Improvement Districts for the Hwy. 74 Corridor and the downtown area. She would also like to work more on Economic Development in the next year.

Ms. DeHart would like to take a proactive approach in planning for future development. This would include looking at alternatives for water and sewer issues and becoming more informed on Union County plans. There was general conversation regarding water and sewer availability. In regards to planning for parks and greenways, staff will continue to pursue grants, plan activities and ask Council consideration in pursuing greenway programs for existing developments. Staff would also like to be active in activities that would expand communication and also expand on branding efforts.

Councilmember Schallenkamp requested Council to instruct staff to pursue the bond rating from a study standpoint to find out how much it will cost and report back to Council. Also, in regards to Hwy. 74 corridor special tax economic district, he would like staff to provide an estimate of the property tax within that boundary. He also suggested contacting CATS and see if they would be willing to add a couple more stops on Highway 74.

### c. Engineering

Mr. Kaufhold explained that the recent call for projects on the stimulus plan was that we only had one intersection. We have several projects on the TIP, one is to build the road beside of us, which is up in the air, one is to plan Old Monroe Road, two are to build intersections at Old Monroe Road & Indian Trail Road and Faith Church Road and one is to build sidewalks.

Staff would like to continue planning, designing and building efforts. There are a few things we can do; one is move forward with Faith Church Road/Unionville-Indian Trail Road intersection. Second, Old Monroe Road interim improvements that MUMPO was doing; Indian Trail staff is now going to pick up that study and finish it for MUMPO and try to implement any of the low costs improvements that do not require right of way acquisition. Staff will also be working on implementing an intersection ranking project, which still needs to go through the Transportation Advisory Committee. Staff also hopes to have our sidewalk projects under construction; four miles worth. Under the stormwater area, construction projects will be continued; there are currently 30 projects ranked that qualify. In a month or two, our resurfacing contract will be advertised. At the end of that project all of the streets that the Town is responsible for maintenance of will have a grade of 98 out of 100.

Efforts will be continued on the Indian Trail Rd/Chestnut connector/Old Monroe Road project; this is still in Raleigh. A DOT representative will be at the next Transportation Advisory Committee meeting. Mr. Kaufhold stated that in regards to using the \$4.2 million in the TIP for the planning and environmental study on Old Monroe Road, which stretches through three jurisdictions, there have been discussions between staff of dividing the money between those jurisdictions and use it to target intersection projects. Along with building and construction management, the Town needs to plan to move dirt; anytime federal money is used the project has to go through a transportation planning process.

Mr. Kaufhold would like to proceed with the implementation of the adopted CIP/Pedestrian Master Plan. He would also like to develop a Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Our current Comprehensive Plan has a transportation component but it is not a specific transportation plan; which would inventory the roadways and develop a plan starting with where we are now and where we would like to be. A transportation plan would take into consideration the future planning of our neighboring jurisdictions. The plan would include not only road plans, but also pedestrian plans, bike plans, mass transit; it would be a more comprehensive study that would give a lot more detail.

Mr. Kaufhold stated that additional planning is needed in the Stormwater Phase II program. This will include developing and adopting a capital improvement program and a maintenance improvement program. He would also like to implement the Street Maintenance Program, which entails assuming the maintenance of additional 25 miles of existing subdivision streets. This would also include having contract mechanisms in place for maintenance responsibilities.

Mr. Kaufhold advised that the eyes of Raleigh are upon our Powell Bill funds. There are other public works directors that had made mention of Indian Trail funds in conversations. The state statute that goes with the Powell Bill funds says that those monies are for the purpose of maintaining, repairing, constructing and reconstructing town streets.

Mayor Quinn inquired why the money has not been spent. Mr. Kaufhold advised that up until October 2007 you could only build sidewalks, build your own new roads and maintain currently owned roads. Compared to other municipalities, Indian Trail has the least miles of roads to maintain. If more roads were maintained by the town it would be a benefit to the citizens as

he feels that the Town can respond quicker to maintenance needs and we would have greater flexibility with those roads.

Councilmember D'Onofrio stated that he was hoping that we would have had the approximate 25 miles of streets by now. He asked Mr. Kaufhold if he is ready to determine which roads we should take over. Mr. Kaufhold advised absolutely. Councilmember D'Onofrio recommended to Council that the Town proceed, not just taking the good roads, but also roads that are in dire need of repair.

Councilmember Howe asked how many miles we can repave or resurface with \$600,000. Mr. Kaufhold advised he will get that information to them at the next Council meeting.

Councilmember Schallenkamp challenged Council to come up with a 2-3 year budget on Powell Bill Funds to bring it down to zero. This way we can say it's all allocated if questioned. There was general conversation in regards to using the Powell Bill funds.

Mr. Kaufhold explained our Town wide pavement condition survey. Councilmember Howe asked Mr. Kaufhold to confirm that Council had nothing to do with that survey. Mr. Kaufhold replied it was his recommendation and it was approved by the Town Manager, council had nothing to do with it.

#### d. Public Safety

Sergeant Coble presented a slide showing proposed future staffing of deputies for the Town. There is need for a community resource officer, additional patrol officers and an additional lieutenant or sergeant position.

Sgt. Coble suggested we resubmit for the Highway Public Safety grant and include a request for equipment; possibly two radar trailers. He feels these would be a vital tool for the deputies and would provide more visibility for residents. He commented on the survey results requesting more visibility during peak traffic times. This is the same time that the deputies are busy with other calls.

He recommends keeping the off duty program funded. It has had a positive effect on crime and good feedback has been received from the residents/businesses. Moving forward will require adding patrol officers for increased visibility.

Sgt. Coble advised they have been looking at a citizen observer alert system. He explained how it worked. It can be set up by groups, neighborhoods in town or people can just request the information they want to know about. The down side is that a person is required to type all of these alerts into the system. This could also be used for roadway improvements; it could send out an alert letting residents know of potential road closures. The program price is based on the population, which for Indian Trail it would be approximately \$3,000 per year, but it must be for a two year term, or approximately \$6,000. There was more discussion as to how this would work.

Mayor Quinn asked about the two investigators on the priority list Sergeant Coble provided to the Public Safety Committee. Sgt. Coble advised that was a long term wish list. He explained the circumstances in which these would be helpful. It would be beneficial for increased communication and to have more officers here to handle our felony cases.

### **COUNCIL PRIORITIZATION OF NEEDS**

Mr. Humphries asked Council to advise staff of what they would like us to investigate and incorporate into the budget process.

### **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Councilmember Hullinger would like to see us expand our parks and recreation. Particularly purchasing land, secure it while the prices are low. Perhaps work with the athletic association.

Councilmember Schallenkamp commented that we obviously need to increase manpower in law enforcement. One of the next big issues for our citizens will be with regards to fire safety. He feels we should be a part of the County study process. The Town should budget and consider a comprehensive town wide fire study and possibly involve the Town of Stallings.

Mayor Quinn said the County runs the fire departments why would we want to take over jurisdiction of their function? Mr. Schallenkamp advised the County does not run them. Discussion continued on this matter.

Councilmember D'Onofrio thanked all department heads for the preparation of the retreat. He would like Council to receive additional information on the bond rating, preliminary costs, etc so we can assess what can be done. In regards to the Business Improvement District, some numbers on the businesses in the downtown area would be helpful. Councilmember D'Onofrio believes we're moving on parks. He likes the suggestion that we utilize the land we already own; a town park where we can hold functions. With public safety, its the same thing, we should control our own destiny.

Councilmember Howe would like to utilize our Powell Bill Funds which will affect our bond rating. We should take over as many roads as possible. She asked the Town Manager if there was anything the Council could do to assist in getting Raleigh involved. She would like to see us partner with the other jurisdictions on projects particularly Old Monroe Road. She supports more deputies. Councilmember Howe would like the town to pursue as many grants as possible and carry through with the projects if the grants are received. She complimented Ms. Sutton on her reporting of the financial information. She also agrees with comments regarding parks and recreation.

Mayor Quinn pointed out the differences in the comparison of a fully staff police force and the arrangements that we currently have with the Sheriff's office. Specifically the expense of a command staff, insurance, liability, benefits, secretarial support staff, buildings and infrastructure. He also hopes the Town will continue efforts to reach out to the community and engaging the public with efforts made to also include business groups.

Councilmember Hullinger stated that this has been a good retreat and thanked everyone.

Councilmember Goodall thanked the staff and complimented Ms. Sutton. He feels the Town should devote full attention to the road situation and believes the pursuit of general obligation bonds to be a good idea. He has mixed opinions on parks; this needs to be pursued very carefully, remembering the economy as we go forward in the budget process. Keeping taxes low was a major point on the citizen survey also. Public Safety didn't hit on Emergency Management or Homeland Security or EMT. He agrees that we need to look at having a fire study done. Regarding public safety, the Town should be careful to look at all the alternatives; there is 3.5 years left in our present contract. If this Council or future Councils ever do decide to start an Indian Trail Police Department, he would say that they should not wait until the end of the contract to do so. He feels we could start a police department right now and not have to increase taxes and have it functional within 18-24 months, but that's something for anyone to consider if they'd like to talk about it. A lot of people on this Council have said that one day we probably will need an Indian Trail Police Department, but as we grow and grow and how big we're going to be after 3.5 - 4 years is anyone's guess. It's just a matter of whether you lease public safety or you own those assets, as far as what's better for the town in the long run. He feels we need to look at all of that very carefully.

Mr. Humphries thanked staff for doing a great job, he expressed his pride in them. We will take this information in the next wave of the budget process.

Councilmember D'Onofrio requested they get the list of things suggested.

Councilmember Howe commented on the email about the sign and confirmed with Mr. Humphries that he will bring back information at a future meeting for Council review.

### **ADJOURN**

Dan Schallenkamp made a motion to adjourn

Council voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

APPROVED:

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John J. Quinn, Mayor

Attest:

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Peggy Piontek, Town Clerk