



**CITY OF SUMMERVILLE
BUDGET MEETING
MAY 31, 2022
6:00 pm**

CALLED TO ORDER: Mayor Harvey called the special called meeting to order.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Harry Harvey gave roll call. Council Members David Ford, Dana W. Mosley, Rickey Hughes, Joe Money, Jr., and Zachary Martin were present. City Manager Janice Galloway and City Attorney Albert Palmour were also present.

INVOCATION: Mayor Harvey gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Council Member Rickey Hughes led the pledge of allegiance.

AGENDA: Mayor Harvey asked if any changes are needed to the meeting agenda. With no changes requested, Council Member David Ford made a motion to approve the meeting agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Zachary Martin and carried unanimously.

WELCOME: Mayor Harvey welcomed visitors and staff to the budget work session. Mayor Harvey announced the month of June would be spent on refining the budget.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mayor Harvey gave the following announcements:

- June and July events are forthcoming.
- There will be a bid opening on June 6, 2022.
- The next regular council meeting will be held on June 13, 2022.
- The Fourth of July Celebration will be held on July 4th, with activities beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Council Member Rickey Hughes asked if a motion could be made to rescind the water and sewer rate increase. Mayor Harvey stated I would rather not do that. We are going to talk about that and if you would like to do that at the next meeting that will be fine. I would like for Council to discuss how we will replace the money if the rate increase is rescinded.

CITY MANAGER: City Manager Janice Galloway reported a balance of \$2,660,932.63 in the operating account.

DISCUSS FY 2022-2023 BUDGET: Mayor Harvey commended City Manager Galloway and staff on their work on the budget. Mayor Harvey explained he would review the budget highlights, and several items need to be looked at. Mayor Harvey stated I want the water rate increase to be discussed in context of what staff has done.

Mayor Harvey reviewed the proposed calendar for the FY 2022-2023 budget. Mayor Harvey stated if the budget does not pass by the end of the fiscal year, we will continue with the current budget until the new budget passes.

Mayor Harvey reviewed the FY 2021-2022 amended budget and the proposed FY 2022-2023 budget and noted there is less than a 1% increase in revenues. In addition, Mayor Harvey stated some items had been added to the expenditures, including the American Rescue Plan and the Main Street Account, and the 2014 SPLOST account has been brought to a zero balance, but the 2020 SPLOST is included in the proposed budget.

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Mayor Harvey requested City Manager Janice Galloway and staff to review the budget highlights. Finance Director Carla Rutledge reviewed the revenues, including the General Fund, American Rescue Plan Act, Main Street, Water Fund, and Gas Fund. Mayor Harvey asked for questions concerning the proposed revenues.

Mayor Harvey requested City Manager Galloway review the budget highlights. City Manager Galloway discussed budget expenditures. City Manager Galloway explained Information Technology was moved from Administration to Information Technology which includes a part-time assistant and building maintenance to remodel a portion of the Probation building for an office for the Information Technology employee. In addition, City Manager Galloway discussed proposed changes to the fire department budget, including approval of two full-time firemen and funding for a new fire truck which is not included in the budget. City Manager Galloway discussed expenditures in each department and changes to the departments, including a reduction of travel and training in the Recreation Department, a request for an additional part-time person for Main Street, the hiring of an Assistant Public Works Director in the water department, and a Regulatory Compliance Tech II in the gas department.

Council Member Joe Money, Jr. questioned the part-time positions. Council Member Money asked if the Information Technology assistant would be an assistant for IT Director Trey Goble. City Manager Galloway stated, "Yes." Council Member Money asked if there was too much work for one person and what the person would do. Trey explained the city consistently is looking at projects that require a lot of technology, and deploying those projects take time from planning to implementation, and the day-to-day issues have kept me busy.

Council Member Money questioned the need for an additional part-time assistant for Main Street. Susan explained the reason for the request is her department is doing a lot of maintenance and beautification projects downtown, and we are starting to process our payments for some activities. Susan explained her current part-time person is spending his twenty hours a week just watering flowers and trees downtown. It does not leave him any extra time to assist with promoting upcoming events, setting up, taking down, and cleaning up events. Mayor Harvey questioned if other city employees could assist with watering and if the number of items needing water had increased. Susan stated we have added additional pottery downtown, and seventeen dogwood trees have been planted along the new walking trail. Mayor Harvey asked if the volunteers could assist in watering. Susan stated they are not allowed to drive the water truck. They do an amazing job, but they do occasionally need assistance.

Council Member Rickey Hughes asked who is doing the custodial work now. City Manager Janice Galloway stated the city hall employees are cleaning their building. City Manager Galloway asked Terry Tinney, who cleans his building. Terry stated Timmy Jo. Council Member Hughes asked is that not working. City Manager Galloway stated it is hard to do that. We've had a custodian before. Council Member Hughes stated I can't see it would be harder for the existing people to clean than to justify a new position. City Manager Galloway stated the position has been in place, we just haven't had anyone in several months. Council Member Hughes asked are we paying it now? City Manager Galloway stated it is in the budget. Council Member Hughes clarified it is in the proposed budget. City Manager Galloway stated yes in the proposed budget. Council Member Hughes asked have we done without this position in the past? City Manager Galloway explained we shared a person with Susan.

Council Member Rickey Hughes questioned the position of Public Works Assistant and the need for the position. Council Member Hughes asked Public Works Director Terry Tinney if he was unavailable would his supervisors be able to answer questions and do the job in his absence. Terry stated, "Yes,"

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Council Member Hughes asked what the Assistant would be doing. Council Member David Ford responded, stating he would be replacing a job that was vacated. Council Member Dana W. Mosley asked but is the job needed? Council Member Hughes questioned if it is working, why add it now? Council Member Ford commented we don't have a backup if someone is out. Council Member Dana W. Mosley commented the problem we have is we have a huge salary and people making \$13.00 an hour, and they are leaving. City Manager Galloway stated if the budget passes, the salary per hour will be increased to around \$14.06. Council Member Hughes stated the problem I see is we are asking the citizens to pay more for a position that is not needed because we are operating smoothly now. I can't justify asking people to pay for a \$53,000 position we have been doing without. City Manager Galloway explained Terry has a lot of knowledge in his head that no one else has, and it would be good if someone can following in his footsteps and learn other parts of his job that is not on paper. Mayor Harvey stated I think we need an assistant or someone that is over some of these areas. City Manager Galloway stated Terry does a good job, he has a lot of knowledge that needs to be passed on, and his job is not a job that can be learned overnight. Mayor Pro Tem Zachary Martin asked Terry how long he has before he can retire. Terry stated, "Two years."

Council Member Hughes questioned the open positions in the water and sewer department and customer service. Terry stated I have one job open. Carla commented that customer service is a vacancy. City Clerk Angie White explained that when we are short in customer service and have to pull someone from billing, the billing gets behind. Council Member Joe Money, Jr. asked if the Regulatory Compliance Technician II was a new position. Terry explained it is a new job and the amount of work is overwhelming for the employee currently in the position and has asked for help. SRCS was going to help us, but that has fallen through the cracks because Trion and Lafayette wants us to pay the bulk, and we can hire our own for what we can pay the SRCS. Council Member Dana W. Mosley asked if this was the position we had already voted on. Terry stated, "Yes."

Council Member Rickey Hughes explained a roof was quoted in the \$30,000 range for the recreation department, but someone decided they wanted a gable roof in the \$80,000 range. Council Member Hughes asked Recreation Director Bo Chamlee what the benefits of a gable roof would be. Bo explained we need a roof because the current one is pouring water. Bo stated I think a roof like we have now is \$35,000, and if it will last twenty years as long as the other one has, we will be in good shape. Council Member Hughes asked Bo are you comfortable if we put a new roof on the building that is there now we would be in good shape. Bo stated, "Yes." Mayor Harvey commented that the current roof is a flat one, and they leak. Mayor Harvey stated you are not going to have a flat roof that does not leak or require maintenance. A gable roof will be better, but I'm not sure we can get that for \$80,000.

Council Member Hughes asked Bo to discuss the need for a Gator and Field Groomer that had been removed from the budget. Bo explained they are currently using a zero-turn lawn mower to groom and drag the fields. Bo stated it does put a lot of wear and tear on the mowers. Council Member Hughes commented the sensible thing to do is to reroof the facility and purchase the equipment, which would be less than \$80,000.

Council Member Joe Money, Jr. asked Police Chief Harold Tucker if he needed both police cars that he requested in the budget. Harold stated, "Yes, Sir I really do." Harold explained the two cars he would be replacing is 2011 crown vics that have been patched over the years. Harold discussed the condition of the vehicles that are currently in the police department's fleet. Harold explained I am proposing to purchase used ones and get rid of the crown vics. Council Member Money asked how many good cars do you have in the fleet now. Harold stated all of them, except for an explorer and the two crown vics.

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Council Member Money asked if everyone had a good take-home vehicle to patrol in. Harold stated, "Yes." Council Member Money asked Harold if both vehicles he wanted to replace were spares. Harold stated, "Yes." Harold stated the spares are used quite often, so I requested two used cars because you will have to rotate them.

Council Member Rickey Hughes asked if \$10,000 could be moved from the library fund to the cemetery fund since the library is now affiliated with the Sara Hightower organization, which would still leave \$40,000 for the library funding. Mayor Harvey explained I would not want to reduce the amount we give to the library because they are a vital part of the community and do a lot of work within the community. Mayor Harvey explained the cemetery board did not request any increase, but the city may consider taking it over from the information provided. We can look at ways we can help with the cemetery. Council Member Joe Money, Jr. questioned if the city takes the cemetery over, are they referring to opening and closing graves or just the maintenance. Terry Tinney stated, "I think just maintenance. Each funeral home has its own gravedigger." City Manager Janice Galloway explained if Mayor or Council would like to look at the financial records for the cemetery, they are available for review. City Manager Galloway stated I think he is hopeful Summerville will take it over. If that happens, Summerville will be responsible for the upkeep a hundred years for now. City Attorney Albert Palmour asked who would be responsible for it if Summerville didn't take it over. City Manager Galloway asked if a plan is not in place for professional care of the cemetery. City Attorney Palmour stated I think the issue is, once all of the lots are sold, there is no revenue. It's just a question if the city wants to incur the expense of maintaining the cemetery. Mayor Harvey commented before that happens, we need to sit down with the cemetery committee and get those details worked out.

Mayor Harvey reviewed the service charges and fee schedules and noted the proposed fee schedule does not include the distilled spirits fee.

Mayor Harvey discussed proposed water and sewer rate changes. Mayor Harvey noted the water would increase \$0.43 for the first 2,000 gallons, and the inside sewer rate would increase \$0.56, which would be a total increase of \$.99 per month increase up to 2,000 gallons. All other gallons will increase \$.09 per thousand over the first 2,000. Mayor Harvey noted the gas base rates would remain the same. Mayor Harvey noted it would be a two percent increase. Mayor Harvey suggested comparing the proposed water rates to surrounding areas. Council Member Dana W. Mosley stated, "I haven't voted for the budget for the past two years due to the water rates, and I'm not going to again if they are in here. We can take them out now, or I will not vote for the budget." Mayor Harvey asked Council Member Mosley if she had recommendations on what needed to be removed. Council Member Mosley stated the Assistant Public Works Director and the other part-time positions. Council Member Hughes stated three positions that come to mind that could be cut: the Public Works Assistant, IT Assistant, and the custodian, which would cut over \$80,000. City Manager Galloway asked are you wanting to remove the part-time position for the recreation department. Council Member Hughes stated, "Yes, ma'am." City Manager Galloway asked do you want to remove the water/sewer maintenance position. Council Member Hughes stated, "Yes, ma'am." City Manager Galloway asked Terry if he could do without that position. Terry stated, "We filled the position, but no one lasted more than three or four months. Every time I turn around, someone is quitting for a better job."

Council Member Joe Money, Jr. asked Recreation Director Bo Chamlee if the fencing is in bad shape on Dunson Field. Bo explained the fencing on Dunson and Morgan Field is in bad shape. Council Member Money asked if it was a safety hazard. Bo stated, "Yes."

Council Member Money asked Police Chief Harold Tucker if the part-time officers are driving the spare vehicles. Harold stated, "At times, yes, but the full-time people will if their cars are in the shop."

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Council Member Money asked Harold if someone was on vacation is their patrol car used. Harold stated, "Right now, no, but if needed, I can get it." Harold explained the cars he wants to replace were cars that were in use 24/7 and were worn out.

Council Member Rickey Hughes explained that removing the four proposed positions of Custodian, IT Assistant, Water/Sewer Worker, and Assistant Public Works Director will recuperate the projected revenues for the water and sewer rate increases. The salaries for those positions are \$111,000, and the projected revenue from the water increase is \$109,500.

Council Member Dana W. Mosley asked Police Chief if the fully equipped patrol cars included installing the equipment and instruments. Chief Tucker stated, "Yes, that is the purchase of the car and the lights." Mayor Pro Tem Zachary Martin asked Chief Tucker if the lights could be used on the new cars. Harold stated, "They won't fit. The radio, yes, but that is about all we could use."

Mayor Harvey requested staff make the necessary changes concerning the rate increase. Wastewater Treatment Plant Chris Tuggle stated, as a department head, I am concerned about the inflation we are experiencing and the rising cost. Even if cuts are made, and the two percent increase is included, we are still going to be cutting it close. It is going to be rough. I think we need to consider that. Mayor Harvey stated, "I am not disagreeing with you."

Mayor Harvey reviewed the Capital Request proposals. Mayor Harvey stated at some point, I would like to move the GEFA loan out of the Capital Requests. Finance Director Carla Rutledge noted the GEFA loan would be paid off in 2023.

Mayor Harvey reported an increase of one step for everyone, and some employees will receive more. Mayor Harvey announced employees who are currently a G12 would be moved to a G13, and everyone would be making at least \$14.06 per hour. Finance Director Carla Rutledge interjected, stating \$14.06 if it is changed and the raise passes. Mayor Harvey requested the Council to review the requested changes to salaries. Carla stated I highlighted vacancies, a new position, and any changes outside the normal raises. Mayor Harvey stated we need to do a salary study and requested staff to begin preparing for a study.

Mayor Harvey discussed Grants, outstanding loans, and the budget worksheet summary for each department.

Mayor Harvey asked Finance Director Carla Rutledge to explain the two Main Street accounts. Carla explained the 100 fund is the normal Main Street account, and the 270 fund is the new Main Street. Carla explained the 100 general fund is the fund that has been there, and the 270 is the new account with the revenues and expenditures that self-balance, and Main Street can only spend what they bring in. Carla explained Main Street had a 100 fund since the beginning, and a special revenue fund and a bank account was set up for Main Street, so it could not be included in the general fund. It has its own revenues and expenditures.

Mayor Harvey discussed transferring money from the water and gas fund to the general fund. Carla reported last year, the transfer came from the gas fund because the water fund had a lot of assets and not a lot of cash.

Mayor Harvey stated that if we are going to cut revenues, we will need to cut expenditures to ensure the budget is balanced. Mayor Harvey stated Council Member Mosley and Council Member Hughes expressed their opinion on the water rate increase. Council Member Joe Money, Jr. stated I agree with them.

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Mayor Harvey stated there are things we can look at. We will be meeting on June 6th, and we will finalize then. Staff needs to rework the budget and see what we can do. I think we need to be careful and proactive regarding what we are doing with raises and increases in revenues. Mayor Harvey explained we did say we were going to increase rates and fees, and if we are going to maintain what we have and what we are doing, we are going to have to increase fees. Council Member David Ford commented we are the only ones not increasing anything. Council Member Joe Money, Jr. stated rates have increased over the past two years, correct? Mayor Harvey stated, "Yes."

Mayor Harvey announced a meeting would be held on June 6th. If the budget is finalized, the first reading will be held on June 13th, and the final reading will be held on June 20th. If it does not pass by July 1, we will need to extend it and operate on the old budget, and we will need to do a spending resolution until it passes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mayor Harvey asked for questions, comments, or concerns. No concerns were addressed.

JASON ESPY: Jason Espy with the Summerville News asked how much the salary increase would cost. Finance Director Carla Rutledge stated, "The actual salary increase is \$58,232.12, and that is just the 1.75%, plus there are other increases included."

Council Member Joe Money, Jr. asked do we need to leave the cemetery funding where it is. Mayor Harvey stated, "I think we do." Council Member Money stated Arch said he could make it to the end of the year. That is December. Mayor Harvey stated we need to work with the cemetery committee and see what we can do. That is going to be a bigger undertaking than it appears to be. Council Member Money asked if the mowing is bid out. Terry Tinney stated, " It is."

ADJOURN: Council Member Dana W. Mosley made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Joe Money, Jr. seconded the motion and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

HARRY HARVEY – MAYOR

Attest:

ANGIE WHITE – CITY CLERK