

Minutes of the special-called meeting of the Saltville Town Council held on June 29, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall

Council: Monica Johnson, Jeff Comer, Eugene Call, Bryan Morris, Steve Surber, and Gary Call

Mayor: C. Todd Young

Staff: Brian Martin, Town Manager
Paul Cassell, Town Attorney
Erik Puckett, Police Chief
Steve Johnson, Clerk/Treasurer

New Business

1. Vote on the proposed 2021-22 budget

Before the vote on the proposed budget, the Mayor asked each Council member to make any comments they wished, and those are as follows:

Monica Johnson did not speak.

Jeff Comer said he respected the thought process that went into the potential tax increase for the purposes that were stated, and it will have to eventually happen. However, he feels that there are potential cuts that could be possibly made first. The proposed 5% raise would also have established some baseline benefit data that could not be backtracked pertaining to VRS.

A proposed 3% raise would be more in line with other nearby localities, and the town could use some of the upcoming COVID funds for bonuses or hazard pay, etc. The 3% raise also provides additional funding that's not allocated since the new Emergency Medical Services department could eventually present some unforeseen expenses like anything new tends to do.

Eugene Call said when he thinks about raising taxes, he worries how the elderly will be able to afford it since most are living on a fixed income. He also doesn't want raises to be based on raising taxes.

Bryan Morris said his only comment was that if the town did not plan for the future now via a small increase in taxes, then there will just be a larger increase in the future.

Steve Surber said he wanted to see the town stay where it is and not raise taxes.

Gary Call said he agreed with the people who spoke at the Public Hearing when they said they did not want their taxes raised, especially since it's been a bad year.

Councilwoman Johnson made the motion to approve the proposed 2021-22 budget, and Councilman Morris seconded. The roll call vote was 1-5 with Councilwoman Johnson voting yes and all others voting no, so the motion failed.

The meeting was recessed until July 1st, and at that time the Council will vote to pay the town's bills for the month of July.