

January 24, 2015 meeting,

The Town of Franklin Board of Aldermen held a retreat on Saturday, January 24, 2015 at 9 a.m. in the Town Hall Board Room to discuss future projects. Mayor Robert S. Scott presided. Aldermen Patti Abel, Verlin Curtis, Joyce Handley, Farrell Jamison, Billy Mashburn and Barbara McRae were present.

Water Treatment Plant Expansion

Summer Woodard – Town Manager - Town Manager Summer Woodard presented the expansion of the Water Treatment Plant, and other Capital Improvement Projects associated with the Town's water system. The Board discussed this topic at length. A copy of the presentation is attached.

Alderman McRae- These are all today's dollars?

Alderman Mashburn – Yes. McGill Associates did very conservative figures on these estimates, because they would rather underestimate the costs than for us to be stuck with a half million dollar bill down the road.

Alderman Jamison – On Old Murphy Road and West Palmer Street, there hasn't been anything done to those since they were put in. And I know there has been a lot of problems. Caterpillar's discharge helps us there too. That's something we are going to have to look at. Even if someone else came in and took over the building, Caterpillar uses a lot of water.

Town Manager Summer Woodard presented sewer projects for the Board to consider in the future. The Board discussed the items at length. A copy of the Presentation is attached.

Alderman Mashburn – The projects listed there, they figured the total costs. That includes bids. Some of these projects we will be able to do in-house. That will help out quite a bit with some of these smaller projects.

Alderman Jamison – We definitely ought to do the ones we need to do. We put on a heavy equipment operator last year to do so. We have a piece of heavy equipment out there that is not being utilized.

Alderman McRae – Are our rates going to cover these?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – That is something we are going to have to take into consideration when we begin the budgeting process.

Strategic Sidewalk Plan

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – We have been working on this project for a couple of months now. This is by no means a finished project. Trevor Dalton, as part of his college project for the completion of his master's degree, looked at all of our sidewalks. Land-Use Administrator Justin Setser has also looked at this. But we need to look at some sidewalks throughout town. You can use some Powell Bill funds for that, but we have not set a separate fund aside for improvements to sidewalks. This is basically a maintenance plan. Suggestions would be encouraged from the Board.

Alderman McRae- Is the traffic count a scientific study?

January 24, 2015 meeting continued,

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – Some of it is based on statistics from the Department of Transportation and other different studies that we tried to do in-house. But some of this is raw data. Mr. Dalton did actually stand and count people. We will look at them and make the rating system on this sheet consistent. Again, this is just a rough draft.

The Board discussed sidewalk/crosswalk issues at length.

Update on Computer Software for Utility Billing and Accounting

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – The current software we use for utility/tax billing is called CSI. We recently went through an extensive two day training session. It was enlightening. In 2009 the Town purchased a plan that would allow the Town to get a discounted rate when CSI upgraded to a new model. The new version is called Smart Fusion. A couple things that our current model does do, and so does Smart Fusion, is that it does have the capability to do an online payment system for utility/tax payments, and take credit/debit card payments for walk-in customers. We have been using CSI for 12 years.

Budget Priorities

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – Basically, a recap with what we have talked about. One thing to consider is the water plant upgrade and expansion, consideration for capital improvement plan and sidewalk/crosswalk and brick pavers; and general budgetary items such as software upgrades.

Alderman Handley – We can't do the software update before the new budget?

Summer Woodard – Town Manager – It takes six months to one year to actually get the upgrade.

Other Considerations/Discussions

Alderman McRae – I am a representative on the Board to Friends of the Greenway. I've missed some meetings, and I wondered if the town could have someone else to represent FROGS. They need an infusion of some ideas and cash. Maybe Justin Setser could help them.

Alderman Abel – One of the things I have is the Whitmire Property. I would love to see us make a plan or get rid of it. It just seems to be sitting there. That's something I wanted to throw out there. Also, the tent out back is totally unused. Also if we could look at Memorial Park. I know parking is an issue, but I think it is under-utilized. You could do concerts down there, and that might start revitalizing that part of town.

Alderman Handley – What are we going to do about the Gazebo. I know money was set aside, but I don't know where we are. I would also like to look at providing more diverse entertainment down there.

January 24, 2015 meeting continued,

Alderman Jamison – I don't see a problem with cleaning it up.

Alderman Mashburn – I know we didn't vote, but I thought the consensus was to clean it up because there were so many options about it.

Mayor Scott – We had 549 vehicle accidents inside the city limits last year. That's something that goes along with speeding. I don't know what we can do about it. I just wish people would start paying attention to our speeding signs, and litter regulations. And the Scottish Tartans Museum has really done a great job at reorganizing and pulling themselves out of the red. Things are looking better. The Appalachian Trail folks have reapplied to be a trail town. That's basically all that I have.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30 a.m.

Robert S. Scott, Mayor

Chad B. Simons, Town Clerk