

**BOARD OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS**

**BUDGET WORK SESSION**

**April 13, 2023 4:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Commissioner Kevin M. Bianca, Chair  
Commissioner Mary F. Chance  
Commissioner Paula S. Etting  
Commissioner Erin S. Hughes  
Commissioner Donna L. Kahoe  
Edward Hopkins, Town Administrator  
Josh Forth, Technology Manager  
Michael Krantz, Director of Administration  
Lisa Moody, Director of Finance  
David Anderson, Media & Public Relations Specialist  
Charles Keenan, Town Counsel

OTHERS: Joan Suitt, Recording Secretary

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Chair Bianca called for approval of the agenda.

Commissioner Kahoe moved and Commissioner Etting seconded the motion to approve the agenda as written. The agenda was approved by the Commissioners.

**FY24 BUDGET:**

LASOS:

Melynda Velez, Executive Director of LASOS, advised the organization works with 20,000 residents throughout the County and 4,700 in the Town of Bel Air assisting with housing, employment and education.

Programing:

- Mommy and Me classes - 6 months - 5 year olds
- After school programs - tutoring - working with 33 students
- Summer Camp - end of June to the middle of July at Bel Air High School. Expecting 200 children
- Adult Literacy, English as Second Language and Citizenship

Ms. Valez invited the Commissioners to the Citizenship Ceremony.

- Youth 16-24 who cannot make it in traditional school. Students are home schooled to receive a diploma. Internship program established where youth work and receive a certification.

Ms. Valez is appreciative and thankful to the Town Commissioners for their support.

Chair Bianca appreciates the work LASOS is doing in the Town.

Commissioner Chance stated Melynda is an extraordinary person who has worked hard and is doing a fabulous job.

#### The Historical Society of Harford County

Christine Potts, Executive Director of the Historical Society, is appreciative of the on-going support and funding the Town of Bel Air has given. Ms. Potts would like to build a close partnership with the Town to work on mutually beneficial goals and initiatives.

- 150 Bel Air Celebration - support and be engaged.
- To brainstorm ideas on ways the Town can utilize the Historical Society and the Hays House.

Ms. Potts feels their property will contribute to the vitality of the Town economically and culturally. Ms. Potts looked at the Town's Strategic Plan regarding community gardens and informed the Hays House has a lot of opportunities for gardening.

George Harrison, Vice President of the Historical Society, notified of a soft opening for the Historical Society and knows it will become a showcase for the Town. The opening event will be "Spring into History."

The Hays House has a new roof and work is being done on the inside. Mr. Harrison advised events are being planned.

Chair Bianca is excited about the Historical Society opening.

#### Continued Review of General Fund Expenditures

The Director of Finance summarized the salaries and benefits. These will be listed within each Department's budget.

- Merit Step increase - for all employees
- Benefits - calculated the same
- Social Security - based on 7.65% of salary
- Medical Insurance - rates remained the same past two years
- Dental Insurance - rates remained the same
- Vision - rates remained the same
- Disability and Life Insurance Benefits - plan is through a contract with LGIT, rates will renew June, 2024
- Pension - Civil and Sworn Officer
- Deferred Comp - Employees offered a match after 1 year's employment. Employees contribute \$45.00 per pay and the Town will contribute \$30.00 per pay. Employees contributing less than \$45.00, the Town's contribution is 50% of what is contributed.
- Workman's Compensation - Town's modification rate decreased.

Commissioner Kahoe asked about rates between office workers and employees who work out of the office. The Director of Finance stated the rates are significantly higher. The Director of Finance will email information to the Commissioners.

### Technology

The Director of Administration reported Josh Forth has been with the Town of Bel Air since 2012 and is a proactive employee focusing on keeping the Town operating 24-7. Without the information technology piece, the Town would not operate. The Director of Administration stated Josh is always available and ensures the Town is protected should a disaster happen.

Josh Forth, Technology Manager reviewed the following:

- Amazon Prime - beginning to charge shipping on more purchases.
- Training - Microsoft and Cisco training on-line.
- Canon Copier lease - replacement copier for the Department of Planning and Department of Public Works.
- Office 365 - renewed on an annual basis. Working with Microsoft to combine line items into one tier.
- Email Protection - renewed on an annual basis.
- CDWG - Barracuda backup servers (2 physical locations plus off-site).
- Armory page website to get a redesign.
- Opsview and Mobile Device Management will be purchased from the FY23 budget.
- PC's - to purchase 10 in FY23 and 11 in FY24.
- Podium/battery and wireless microphone - to purchase in FY23.
- Mobile Routers (2) - connect wirelessly to the Town's network. To purchase in FY23.

Commissioner Etting asked where the routers would be stored. Mr. Forth stated at the Armory and Department of Public Works.

- Evidence Tracker - for Police Department.
- Network Switch (2) - replacements.

Commissioner Kahoe inquired about Social Media archiving service. Mr. Forth advised the Town provides information to the service and indexes comments made. Mr. Forth will check on the duration of archiving.

Chair Bianca asked if the Town offers on-line training to staff in phishing and malware. Mr. Forth tests by creating a fake phishing campaign and if clicked on it tells about how to identify. The Town is working on cyber security training.

Chair Bianca inquired when paying for training, does it tie the employee for a certain time.

The Director of Administration advised the Town is looking into an educational reimbursement with some expectation afterwards.

Chair Bianca appreciates Mr. Forth for all his outstanding work.

Commissioner Etting inquired if the Town ever had a breakthrough in the system. Mr. Forth advised not since 2017 and noted because of the backup system everything was restored.

#### Human Resources

The Director of Administration notified there are no changes to staffing and reviewed:

- Training/Membership - several expenditures for conferences and memberships.
- Advertising - will be cut. The Keldair tracking system includes advertisements on indeed.com.
- Contracts - Postage machine, General Code changes, eCode360 annual maintenance, MML's web-based compensation survey, Innovative Insurance ACA Employer Reporting.
- Physical Testing - covers random drug testing, physical exams, new hire processing, DOT drivers test, and Police Officer test.
- Supplies/Printing - covers items for successful running of the Administration Department.

Commissioner Etting inquired if the Town has a records retention. The Director of Administration stated yes and does not know how old it may be. Mark Reed has been instrumental in helping with archiving and there are plans to visit Maryland State Archives to learn from the experts.

Mr. Keenan reminded about issues on boundaries and the importance of archived records.

#### Elections

The Director of Administration did not request a pay increase for the Judges and Polling Assistants. They help each other out during the day of election.

Chair Bianca inquired if the Judges and Assistants ever received a raise. The Director of Administration advised four years ago. Chair Bianca recommends looking at this next year.

One of the Poll Assistants may not be available for the upcoming election. The Director of Administration requested Town resident recommendations.

Commissioner Kahoe exited the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

## Administrator

The Director of Finance reviewed the Administrator's budget.

Added: MCMA dues and MCMA conference

## Legal

Rates increased.

## Commissioners

The Director of Finance reviewed the Commissioner's budget.

## Public Relations

The Director of Finance notified there were no changes to travel, training, memberships, telephone and postage.

- Marketing/Public Relations - the same as previous year. Added the Bel Air 150 celebration. Majority of the money is the cost of banners. The Downtown Alliance is looking at sponsorships for the banners.

## Finance

The Director of Finance advised there are no changes to personnel. The staff are knowledgeable and have the desire to work together as a team.

- Travel/Training/Memberships - continued CPA education to keep up with certifications. Members of several organizations that keep the Director and Deputy Director in the know. Beneficial to attend conferences/seminars to talk with counterparts.

Education reimbursement - staff member wanting to learn and grow who is attending on-line classes for an Accounting Degree. An educational reimbursement policy is being developed for Town staff.

- Postage - no change.
- Employee Recognition - no change.
- Advertising/Tax Sale - no change.
- Audit - contract was bid FY22 as a three-year contract with a two-year extension option. A single audit is needed for ARPA funds.
- GASB Pension Valuation and OPEB Actuarial Valuation - both have been standards for many years.
- Banking Fees - cost for various bank fees.
- Telephone - cost for Director's cell phone.
- Supplies - not much change.
- Processing Fees - outsource printing and mailing for real estate tax bills.

Discussion by Commissioners on Budget Issues

1. Workers Compensation rate for different classes.
2. Social Media archiving period.

The Director of Finance will bring a copy of the spreadsheet for non-profit funding.

The next Budget Work Session is Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at the Armory, 4:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

**APPROVED:** May 1, 2023

Signature on file  
Kevin M. Bianca, Chair  
Board of Town Commissioners

Signature on file  
Michael L. Krantz, Town Clerk