

02-26-2020 Town Council Meeting Responses to Council Questions

ITEM #4: Approve the Miscellaneous Budget Ordinance Amendment and Project Ordinance Amendments to Adjust Various Fund Budgets for FY 2019-20

Council Question:

Where do the proceeds from the occupancy tax go, aside from the amount that goes to the Visitor's Bureau? What are they used for?

Staff Response:

In addition to supporting the Visitor's Bureau, hotel occupancy tax is one of the Town's revenue sources that help pay for General Fund services (general government, planning, building & development services, housing & community, public works, police, fire, parks and library) provided by the Town. The funds received are not directly attributed to any particular expenditure, rather they help balance the General Fund Budget. The FY 2020 occupancy tax budget is \$1.3 million and represents 1.9% of the General Fund budget of \$68.5 million.

Council Question:

When will the electric buses be purchased and how long does it take to get them, once ordered?

Staff Response:

Three (3) electric buses have been ordered from GILLIG (bus manufacturer approved by Council in October 2019). The current estimated delivery schedule is between December 2020 and March 2021. Town staff is working with Piedmont EMC to install a new transformer near the Transit facility to serve the charging stations for the electric buses. A schedule for the construction and installation is being developed.

Council Question:

Will we have to wait to have the full amount of funding in hand to start the work on the Cedar Falls tennis courts or will we be able to start the work with what we have? What is the current thinking as to options for identifying the remainder of funds needed?

Staff Response:

We can complete the public input process and finalize bid documents with existing funding. We will have to wait until we have the full amount of funding in hand to start construction. This is because the project involves demolition of the existing courts, installation of new support infrastructure such as electrical wiring and lighting, installation of a new ADA accessible path, and a slightly expanded footprint in order to allow for more appropriate spacing in between the courts.

We have submitted the project as part of the FY 2021 CIP process. The Parks and Recreation Department is also exploring the possibility of applying for external funding from the USTA, NC Tennis Association, and the state Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) program, which if awarded would cover a portion of the remaining costs. The USTA and NC Tennis Association grants would be relatively small. We believe that the Cedar Falls Park project currently does not have all of the components for a

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successful PARTF grant application ready for the current grant cycle (due in May). The Town may be able to work towards producing a competitive PARTF grant application in May, 2021. PARTF grants are distributed statewide on an annual basis and the selection process is very competitive for the limited amount of funding that is available.

Council Question:

What is the a plan for covering the remainder that is needed for the Cedar Falls Park tennis court project, aside from moving \$5,594 to this project?

Staff Response:

We have submitted the project as part of the FY 2021 CIP process. The Parks and Recreation Department is also exploring the possibility of applying for external funding from the USTA, NC Tennis Association, and the state Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) program, which if awarded would cover a portion of the remaining costs. The USTA and NC Tennis Association grants would be relatively small. We believe that the Cedar Falls Park project currently does not have all of the components for a successful PARTF grant application ready for the current grant cycle (due in May). The Town may be able to work towards producing a competitive PARTF grant application in May, 2021. PARTF grants are distributed statewide on an annual basis and the selection process is very competitive for the limited amount of funding that is available.