

QUESTIONS ON THE BUDGET

1) How will the Police and Fire steps work?

The step compensation structure is the pay rate associated with each position and the ability for the city to have a solid career path that helps us to recruit and retain these employees. For example: a firefighter is hired at the minimum hiring rate in the first step and once he completes trainings and certifications for that next level firefighter/engineer he moves into the minimum of the next step. Is that in addition to the merit increases? The merit increase would be based on the employees' performance during the specified period of time which for the City is annually on the employees anniversary date. Our evaluations are based on job competencies such as Productivity, Quality of Work, Initiative and Responsibility, etc. and this evaluation allows managers/supervisors to identify gaps, offer training if applicable and evaluate an employees performance and compensate employees appropriately.

2) EMS and negotiating with the County – Last year, I had a conversation with the County Manager, Steve Stone, about the County paying a part of EMS services. Because we were just putting together the Paramedic Program, Mr. Stone and I agreed to give it a year and then discuss the County helping with the costs. The new City Manager is aware of starting those conversations.

3) Gas Cards vs Wholesale – The City used to have their own pumping stations but when the City sold their property to the hospital, they were shut down for good. If you were to build them now, we would have no property to place them on as they take up a large amount of acreage. In many of the towns I have worked in, they are breaking down a lot, either with the computer systems or the actual pumping systems.

4) Are City vehicles using the fuel necessary for their vehicles? All Public Services vehicles use the suggested octane ratings apart from the v6 trucks and one large truck which the spark plugs will fail unless we use high octane. High Octane is used on 3 trucks of Public Works and lawn equipment and is required.

5) Number of Employees – See attached.

6) Building Inspection Fees can only be used for Building Inspection staff and supplies for them. They cannot go to the General Fund by State law.

7) UNC Fellow – The total cost is \$63,730 to which the City will be paying \$25,000 for a year's worth of work. UNC pays the remainder of the money. This person would be working on the website update for ease of use by our citizens and visitors; historical markers for walking tours of the City; and working in each Department to help them with a project, including next year's budget. This is a graduate student.

- 8) **Digital Scanning** – We currently have many storage areas including 3 huge containers of City papers over at Sunny Point that need to be digitized and be able to be scannable, so we can stop the paper overload. The part time worker and the Deputy City Clerk oversee this project working with Toshiba to digitize all records of the City and give them back to us electronically. This year, 17 boxes were scanned, and they are being loaded into our portal. The two employees go through the boxes before they go to Toshiba for better organization of the materials before scanning.
- 9) **Why is there ROW trimming money in the Electric budget?** This trimming is for power line clearing to keep limbs off the power lines.
- 10) **What are contracted services in the Police Department for? Please itemize.** Please see the attached. This was listed in the budget.
- 11) **EV Chargers are a policy decision by the Board.** There is federal grants available right now and they would bring in revenue for the Electric funds.
- 12) **What are the pros and cons of wooden vs plastic trash cans for the City?**
The recycled plastic trash containers are easy maintenance and have a longer life than the Wooden trash cans. The plastic will be easier to transfer around in the instance of tropical weather. The wooden containers require a lot of maintenance and upkeep, and their longevity is significantly shorter than the recycled plastic. Either way, they need to be replaced.
- 13) **HICAPS** – There is no HICAPS grant so money is in for the sidewalks for City buildings under the HICAPS report and then sidewalk repair citywide (\$100,000). The HICAPS report and suggestions were ONLY for identified sidewalks at or in front of city buildings. The \$100,000 is for existing sidewalks around the City that need replacement or repair.
- 14) **Under Parks and Recreation, please clarify what the \$224,000 of non-personnel costs are in the budget.** Two employees from Public Works are going to Parks and Recreation for maintenance for the parks starting 7/1. Non personnel expenses include PR uniforms, vehicle supplies (inspections, oil changes, and regular vehicle maintenance), and gas for 5 vehicles, all cost associated with our recreational programs such as before and after school, summer camp, seniors activities, Egg hunt, Crab Derby, Kids Fishing Tournament, Tennis Camp, Youth Basketball, concert series, Movies on the Lawn, Winterfest activities, Santa’s workshop, Supper with Santa, office supplies such as paper, pencils, pens, cleaning supplies like Clorox, toilet paper and paper towels for all facilities, open gym basketballs, 4th of July Children’s Games, Teacher workday activities, spring break camp, Christmas camp, Robotics camp, training and workshops for the staff, cost for licenses (pesticides)and certifications, workshops, conferences

for learning, telephones (landline and cell), postage, internet, utilities and water for 16 buildings and parks, park mulch, playground repairs, repair costs and maintenance costs for (16) buildings and facilities, monthly copier costs, monthly pest control for PR buildings, ASCAP licenses for the City, maintenance equipment for the (2) roll over park maintenance positions, lease for (2) 15 passenger vans and Explorer, recycled plastic cans to replace those on the waterfront and parks. (also see attached page)

- 15) **Would EMS with Doshier work with a shared cost?** Has Doshier ever been approached about this? **The Fire Chief has discussed this many times with them.**

- 16) **What is the total amount of money saved in this year's budget due to position vacancies and where does that money go?** **Approximately \$370,000 was not spent due to vacancies and that money will go into the General Fund under Fund Balance.**

- 17) **Merit Costs** - The budget contains \$179,151 in salary increases for the COLA and with benefits would cost \$225, 854. The budget also contains \$164,439 in increases for Merit and with benefits would cost \$207,080. Merit is not automatic.

- 18) **Merit System vs Bonus System** – That is a Board decision that should be evaluated after the Budget is adopted as this will take a while educating the Board and public on our current Merit System. Similar merit systems are used in every community around us and the County except Boiling Springs Lake.

- 19) **Vehicles** – A list of vehicles is attached. Costs for leasing them are \$347,663 per year.

City of Southport

Number of Employees as of June 14, 2024

Area	Department	Full-Time	Part-Time	Comments
Elected Body	Mayor & Board of Aldermen		7	
City Management	City Management	2	1	One FT position previously eliminated for WS merger
	City Clerk	2		
	Public Information Officer	1		
	Finance & Utilities	6	2	
	Human Resources	1		
Public Safety	Police	16	5	
	Animal Control	1	1	
	Fire	13		
	Rescue/EMS	3		
Public Works	Public Works Management	2		One transferring to County July 1 Both transferring to County July 1 One retiring June 30
	Buildings & Grounds Maintenance	9		
	Streets Maintenance	6		
	City Garage	2		
	Water and Sewer Enterprise	2		
	Electric Enterprise	2		
	City Engineers		2	
Development Management	Planning, Zoning, Code Enforcement	2		Fully self-funded by building permit and inspection fees
	Inspections and Permitting	4		
Parks & Community	Parks & Recreation	4	5	Fully self-funded by building rental revenue Mostly self-funded by occupancy taxes
	Community Buildings Management	1	2	
	Tourism & Community Relations	2		
Total City of Southport		81	25	

10) What are contracted services in the Police Department for? Please itemize.

It was itemized in the submitted budget:

Central Squares (Records Management Systems \$7148.00)
Southern Software (\$4,525)
DCI (\$2,000)
Wolfcom Body & Mobile Camera Subscription and backup (\$4,100)
Computer Backup Systems
FMRT (\$1,700)
Axon cartridges and supplies included (increase to \$11,852.00 annually)
BC Law Enforcement Range (firearms training facility -\$750)
Annual RADAR Recert (\$1200)(10 units),
Lexipol LLC.(\$9215.03) (Currently includes 3 system usages;
KMS; policy and legal services
Police 1 Academy; training and training records resource management
Cordico; officer wellness support program) (\$3500)
copier lease and service contract, (\$2500)
LEADS Online (pawn, eBay, Craigslist investigative/research tool)
Leasing of Police Building (\$53,750.04 1st year)
PoliceApp/OCV (\$3995)
Tyler Technologies Citations (\$2050.00)
APS operational programs.

14) Under Parks and Recreation, please clarify what the \$224,000 of non-personnel costs are in the budget.

These items are listed in the budget spreadsheet:

Workers Compensation Insurance workers compensation insurance with the NCLM \$10,371
Uniforms & Protective Gear PR staff uniforms for all full time and part time employees \$5,000
Vehicle Supplies Fuel and supplies for City bus, city explorer, city vans, and city truck \$6,500
Departmental Supplies: all supplies for 4 recreation buildings and 13 facilities \$11,190
 Special Events \$5,200
 Robotics Camp \$2,500
 Recreation programs \$17,000
 Seniors \$9,150
 Athletics \$14,960

Total Departmental Supplies \$60,000

Travel & Training: NCRA and NRPA dues, conferences, workshops and classes; Pesticide license, CPSI, CPRP, CPRE certifications, CDL licenses. \$5,500
Communications Recreation facilities telephones, internet access, postage, and cell phones. \$6,500
Utilities - Parks & Recreation Utilities for 4 recreation buildings and 13 recreation parks and

sites \$46,200

R/M Equipment Maintenance and repair on computers and phones \$2,000

R/M Vehicles Vehicle inspections, oil changes, and repairs to the city bus, vans, truck, and explorer. \$3,150

R/M Facilities Regular and preventative maintenance on all PR parks and sites/playgrounds plus emergency repairs when needed. \$3600 is for court repairs and \$7000 for restriping. Total \$ 51,600

Contract Services Monthly copier costs, concerts and movies in the park, CDL licenses, Monthly pest control, ASCAP for the City, Perry Weather contract, Cintas contract. \$27,850

Total Non-Personnel Costs \$ 224,671

FY2025 Vehicle Expense Budget

Department	Leased Vehicles		All Vehicles	
	# Leases	Payments	Fuel/Supplies	Maintenance
Administration	1	7,000	600	
Buildings & Grounds	4	22,000	16,000	5,000
Garage	2	12,000	4,110	1,000
Streets	7	48,000	25,000	25,000
Police	16	164,613	57,000	6,500
Fire			40,000	40,000
Rescue	2	15,000	20,000	12,000
Dev Services- Planning/Zoning	1	7,000	600	1,000
Dev Services-Permitting	2	14,000	1,600	1,500
Parks & Recreation	3	51,050	6,500	3,150
Electric	1	7,000	650	1,000
Total	39	\$347,663	\$172,060	\$96,150

Notes

The fuel and maintenance budgets include costs for other vehicles including:

- Firetrucks and ambulances
- Work vehicles (dump trucks, backhoes, tractors, mowers, etc)
- Power equipment
- City owned vehicles
- Insurance costs are not listed