

TOWN OF WILSON'S MILLS
WORK SESSION
April 27, 2026

PRESENT: Mayor Fleta Byrd, Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett, Councilmembers Doris Riley, Tim Brown, and Carolyn Dobbin.

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Manager Leighanna Worley and Town Clerk Emily Matthews. Councilmember David McGowan joined via Zoom

CONVOCATION: Mayor Byrd declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 4:30pm.

MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION: A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin to go into Closed Session at 4:31pm pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) "...consult with attorney..." and to invite Planning Director Oldham into the Closed Session. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION TO COME OUT OF CLOSED SESSION: A motion was made by Councilmember Tim Brown and seconded by Councilmember Doris Riley to come out of Closed Session at 5:23pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Departmental Reports: Mayor Byrd asked if there were any specific questions about the departmental reports and there were none. She commented that the recent Touch A Truck event had great attendance.

Budget Discussions: Town Manager Leighanna Worley passed out and updated budget spreadsheet to Council and said the notes in red are what have changed since their last spreadsheet. She said the projections from the North Carolina League of Municipalities have changed. She said prior to this year we received a grant for our School Resource Officer for \$60,500 but this year we are receiving a grant for 126,000 for 2 SRO's, one of the Elementary School and one for the new High School. Ms. Worley said she added in a Powell Bill Fund Balance Appropriation of \$40,000. She said there is already \$90,000 calculated for revenue and the \$40,000 would be what we would be pulling for street repair. She said those amounts are reflected in Public Works expenditure line items.

Councilmember Brown asked about the "interest earned" line item and Ms. Worley said that is the interest earned on our bank accounts.

Ms. Worley said the audit contract line is still highlighted under Governing Board because the rest of the proposals were just received today. Council will see the proposals at their next meeting and when they decide on an auditor the line item will be updated.

Ms. Worley said there are 2 lines under contingency, and they are Capital Outlay Projects and professional municipal studies. She said Council discussed removing those at their last budget session, but she feels it would be a good idea to leave them in for now for the Park Master Plan. She said the LP gas line was increased for the Public Works shop heater.

Councilmember Brown asked about the IT services line item and what that is for. Ms. Worley said it is for the technology in the chambers, staff computers, phones, Wi-Fi, etc.

Ms. Worley said the salary and FICA line items for all departments are based on the salary study. She said a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is also included in all departments due to some employees making more than the salary study showed. All departments also include a 5 percent buffer for any licenses or certifications the employee may obtain in the upcoming year. She said a 5 percent 401k match for all contributing employees was on the wish list from Human Resources Director Jenny Martin so that was also included in the numbers for each department. She explained this would only be for employees contributing to 401k and the town would only match up to 5 percent.

In the Administration Department Ms. Worley said the travel and training lines were increased to allow for continuing education classes within the department. Councilmember Brown asked why the travel line for Governing Board was not increased and Ms. Worley said it was increased in the last spreadsheet Council was given due to Council planning to attend CityVision again next year. Councilmember Brown asked why the postage line was decreased and Ms. Worley said we do not mail nearly as much as we used to. Councilmember Brown asked about the dues line item and Ms. Worley said that it is for various associations the employees are part of.

Regarding the Police Department, Ms. Worley said the salaries, FICA, COLA and 401k match are all based on the salary study as well. She also noted that the Town is required by law to contribute to 401k for all sworn officers, but the officers will be offered an additional 5 percent match like all other employees. Councilmember Brown asked if the required 401k contribution is in a separate line from the 401k match provided by the town and Ms. Worley said yes. She said the LEO 401k line is the state required portion. She said that only applies to sworn law enforcement officers and the numbers would change if we were to hire non-sworn officers. Councilmember Brown commented on how high the total for group insurance is overall. Ms. Worley said the rates on the spreadsheet are estimated and on the high end, she said we do not have the new rates yet. Councilmember Brown said he thinks we should shop around for better rates and Ms. Worley said we probably will shop next year. She said we didn't shop this year because the salary study took priority. Ms. Worley said she added funds to the Capital Outlay Equipment line for a camera at Wilson's Mills Road and Fire Department Road. Councilmember Brown asked if we should wait to see if DOT decides to put a traffic device there and Ms. Worley said a camera is still needed in the area. She said the numbers listed in the budget account for our portion of what we would have to pay for the camera. Councilmember Brown asked about the funds in the software line and Ms. Worley said that it is for the CAD software used by the department and they switched to a new software company this year. Councilmember Brown asked about the professional services line and Ms. Worley said that it is for psychological evaluations or having someone from an outside agency come in to work on an investigation. Councilmember Brown asked about the travel line item and asked if the officers do not use their town issued vehicles for work travel. Ms. Worley explained the travel line is also for lodging and food while attending continuing education classes. Councilmember Brown asked if we get anything for participating in the Governor's Highway Safety Program. Chief Williams said once participation points accrue, we are able to use them for certain items.

For the Public Works Department Ms. Worley said salaries, FICA, COLA and 401k match are all based on the salary study. She said the uniform line item is for the uniforms as well as for the cleaning and replacing of the uniforms. The

oil line was decreased based on what has been spent this year in that line. The departmental supplies line was increased from last sheet. On the last spreadsheet the town hall cleaning was included in Public Works under building and grounds maintenance, but it has been moved to Governing Board. Councilmember Brown asked for an example of how funds in the building and grounds line would be spent and Mr. Moore said recently it has been used for HVAC, new doorknobs, and replacing toilets. Councilmember Brown asked what would happen if we were to go over budget in that line and Ms. Worley said we would have to make a budget amendment because all of building and grounds maintenance is in the Public Works budget. Councilmember Brown asked why the departmental supply line decreased and Ms. Worley said there were some items that were coming out of that line that could've been coming from other lines. Councilmember Brown said we need to name the driveway leading to Town Hall from Wilson's Mills Road so we can receive Powell Bill funds for it. Ms. Worley said it wouldn't be covered by Powell Bill because it doesn't meet the required state standards. Under capital outlay and equipment, the wish list items were a new mower, shop heater, propane, and signpost driver for a total of \$21,000. She said the Powell Bill revenue is \$90,000 and the Powell Bill Fund Balance is \$40,000 which equals the expenditures listed at \$130,000.

Ms. Worley said salaries, FICA, COLA and 401k match are all based on the salary study in the Planning Department. She said professional services were increased for our engineering and planning services with KCI. She said \$8,400 is also included for the annual contracted amount with CloudPermit. Departmental supplies were increased for the new plotter/scanner. She also increased travel and training lines for continuing education in the department. Councilmember Brown asked about the phone line and Ms. Worley said it is for phone stipends or town issued cell phones.

Ms. Worley said the wish list for the parks and events department included a storage building with shelving for \$20,000 and electric transformer. She said a splashpad is noted on the spreadsheet, but it was left on in error, and it is not budgeted for. She said the Community Park line includes funds for general upgrades at the park. Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin asked about the \$8,000 listed in the dog park line and Ms. Worley said that it is for general maintenance.

After reviewing each department, Ms. Worley said there is an overage of \$318,000 the total from all wish list items is \$352,000 which would leave a deficit of \$33,000. She reminded Council there will not be any revenue replacement in the coming fiscal year like there has been in the past. She also said there are some corrections that need to be made and those funds will be pulled from fund balance in order to make the corrections. She said it would be her recommendation to use leftover funds to replenish our Fund Balance and get the percentage back up.

Councilmember Brown asked if we could contract with the County for Animal Control services. Ms. Worley said in the past the County told us we would need to handle animal control ourselves once we established a maintenance department and Police Department. Chief said contracting would also cost money. She said at an earlier budget session Council discussed the Animal Control employee being a security officer and back-up for the SRO at the high school. Councilmember Tim Brown asked if they would be a sworn officer and Chief said no. He said it is hard to keep a sworn officer in an Animal Control

position due to lack of interest. Councilmember Tim Brown asked once the high school is at full capacity will we get another SRO. Chief said every school wants additional SROs but there is no funding for additional ones. He also mentioned the Animal Control employee would complete training and become certified in Animal Control.

Human Resources Director Jenny Martin reviewed the process she went through to conduct the salary study. She said the study will help us with decision making moving forward. She said it also attracts new employees as well as retains our current employees and gives structure overall. Ms. Martin said she worked with department heads to get updated job descriptions and she is currently working to finalize those. Councilmember Tim Brown said he appreciates Ms. Martin's hard work and dedication.

Ms. Martin said as part of her research she contacted 23 other municipalities of various sizes and received responses from fifteen of them. Councilmember Brown asked what our current population is and Mrs. Oldham said approximately 2860. Ms. Martin said of the 15 municipalities she heard back from she chose 7 to compare salary ranges for each position. Councilmember Brown asked if Council could see the salary for each employee to see where they fall in the salary range for their position. Ms. Martin said since that is dealing with individual salaries, Council would need to go into closed session, but she would be happy to discuss it with them in closed session. She passed out information on the new salary grades and said a specific formula was used to determine the grades. She said the higher the salary grade, the more the position entails. Ms. Martin also worked with department heads to create a certification/licensure/degree list for each position and there are benefits for each of those. Councilmember Brown asked what happens if the employee already has certain certifications, licenses, or degrees. Ms. Martin said each employee is placed at the hiring rate in their range and then they move up the scale based on their certifications, license, or degree as well as their experience and that is how their final salary is determined. Mayor Byrd said the town has had salary studies before but none as detailed as this one. Ms. Martin said there were 5 positions whose current salary is already where the employee should be for salary and some higher than where they should be. She said that needs to be fixed in a way that still benefits the employee. She said now that the study is complete, she highly recommends a COLA each year in order to keep us in line before the next study.

Ms. Martin said she is available for any questions from Council and Councilmember Brown suggested Council go into Closed Session before final salaries are approved.

Ms. Worley said she would like for Council to have another budget session in the next couple weeks to discuss final numbers before approval of the budget. After discussion it was the consensus of Council to have a budget session on May 14th at 5:00pm.

**MOTION TO GO INTO
CLOSED SESSION:**

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Tim Brown to go into Closed Session at 6:32pm pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) "...personnel..." Motion carried unanimously.

**MOTION TO COME
OUT OF CLOSED
SESSION:**

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem JC Triplett and seconded by Councilmember Doris Riley to come out of Closed Session at 6:53pm. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Councilmember Tim Brown and seconded by Councilmember Carolyn Dobbin to recess the meeting until May 14th, 2026, at 5:00pm. Motion carried unanimously.



The meeting recessed at 6:54pm.


JC TRIPLETT, Mayor Pro-tem

ATTEST:


EMILY MATTHEWS, CMC
Town Clerk