

Boone Scales Back Tax Bump, Not Spending

Written by Steve Frank
Friday, 20 June 2014 05:57

With the Boone 2014-15 budget on the table, town council members found a six-cent tax rate hike hard to swallow—and scaled back that proposed tax increase—but not the budget. Council woman Lynn Mason was first to express doubts, “What I would be more comfortable with—and I just want to throw this out for discussion—is doing three cents this year and funding the difference from the remaining fund balance,” and she said, “I just think it’s too much to put on our businesses and residents in the community for one year.” She also said she hoped for continued dialogue with the county commission on the sales tax distribution that impacted the current budget—and the 2014-15 budget— by about \$2 million dollars. While other council members agreed that the 6-cent jump was too much, others thought Mason’s three cents was too little in light of the town’s situation—Jennifer Pena said, “ I definitely think that six cents is too much all at once, and I would be in favor of perhaps doing it over time incrementally, and not the whole rate at one time.” But she went on to say, “I’m just concerned that if we don’t do more than three cents now—we could perhaps do four cents now—it’s just going to be worse for us down the road.” And in the end, in a unanimous vote, council members voted to take the balance from reserve and bump the tax rate 4 cents per \$100 valuation in their passage of the \$26,303,193 fiscal year budget that spends nearly 18% more than the current budget becomes effective July 1st.