Public Hearing
1999-2000 Proposed Budget
May 17, 1999
7:00 p.m.

The Elkton Town Council held a Public Hearing on May 17, 1999 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers. Mayor M. Lee Dearing presided over the hearing. The roll call was as follows:

PRESENT

F. A. Bennett
C. E. Dean
B. B. Horne
W. E. Printz
R. L. Snow

ABSENT

R. C. Davis

Gerald Monger, Town Manager/Superintendent, Dale Davenport, Attorney, Robert Marshall Chief of Police, Kenny Flick, Director of Public Works, and Julia Smith, Treasurer/Clerk were also present.

Mayor Dearing stated that the purpose of the public hearing was to hear comments on the 1999-2000 Proposed Budget.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Dr. Trabosh

Dr. Trabosh stated that some of his comments are not aimed at this council. Dr. Trabosh asked that everyone reflect back on the town. Dr. Trabosh stated that one of the things when he first came here was he met with Gerald Monger and saw a map of the town with improvements to be made. Dr. Trabosh stated that instead of the improvements being done we now have a county dump, sewer plant and a concrete company at the location improvements were to be made. Dr. Trabosh stated that this was not a really effective use of our water front property. Dr. Trabosh states that Route 33 split the town right in half. Dr. Trabosh stated that the zoning hasn't helped the town either. Dr. Trabosh stated that people have asked, "Why funding for EDRC?". Dr. Trabosh asked why not fund EDRC. Dr. Trabosh stated that EDRC provides continuity of policy, focuses on issues, Board of Directors with an interest in the Town with logical conclusions of what's good for Elkton. Dr. Trabosh stated that councils' ten even twenty years done the line with ask and wonder why we did not fund EDRC. Dr. Trabosh asked that the council approve funding EDRC for the full requested amount.

Bill Holt

Mr. Holt stated that he and his wife live here and have run a business in Elkton for more than 26 years. Mr. Holt stated that he was a past member of the council, and has served on the Planning Commission. Mr. Holt stated that when he read the article about some of the plans for the town budget he was upset. Mr. Holt stated that he noticed that the Historical Society and EDRC were drastically cut. Mr. Holt stated that he was appalled to hear about the possible elimination of all donations. Mr. Holt stated that the council needs to know the difference between a donation and an

investment. Mr. Holt stated that money to EDRC and the Historical Society are investments. Mr. Holt stated that the Miller-Kite house is owned by the town and volunteers work to keep it up. Mr. Holt stated that donations are okay. Mr. Holt stated that we need to make Elkton a better place to live and do business.

Benny King

Mr. Benny King - 500 "F" Street. Mr. King stated that about nine years ago when he moved to downtown, when you came into downtown there were many vacant buildings. Mr. King stated that his building was probably one of the worst in downtown. Mr. King stated that a lot of the buildings were in bad shape and at that time we had no EDRC. Mr. King stated that he had second thoughts on spending money on his building to make improvements. Mr. King stated that if you go downtown now it's a busy place. Mr. King stated that he doesn't contribute all the improvements to EDRC. Mr. King stated that EDRC gave Elkton a push. Mr. King stated that he met with Joe Hammer with EAUS. Mr. King stated that Mr. Hammer wants to make improvements to the EAUS building and met with five individuals to get improvements started. Mr. King stated that he told Mr. Hammer to contact Cathy Frazier with EDRC. Mr. King stated that Mr. Hammer contacted Ms. Frazier and she is helping them get started with the many resources EDRC has. Mr. King stated that EDRC was willing to help right then and there. Mr. King requested that the town fund EDRC in the budget.

Haze Crider

Mrs. Hazel Crider - Elkwood. Mrs. Crider stated that in 1997 council voted to wing off EDRC from donations. Mrs. Crider stated that the concerns of the citizens are that if we continue to give money to other organizations can we operate without raising utilities and taxes. Mrs. Crider stated that another concern of citizens is that EDRC should reach out to the citizens and let them know what is going on. Mrs. Crider stated that citizens would be willing to help EDRC with fund-raises. Mrs. Crider stated that the Crusin' only happened one time and was a great success. Mrs. Crider stated that any organization should be willing to have fund-raises to help support their selves. Mrs. Crider stated that she did not want to see any money handed out and then the load of it handed back to the Senior Citizens on fixed incomes. Mrs. Crider stated that ISTEA grant has gone no where. Mrs. Crider stated that citizens are wondering about this. Mrs. Crider stated that citizens are very disillusioned by all of this. Mrs. Crider asked that the load not be handed back to the citizens.

Mildred Shifflett

Mrs. Shifflett stated that her comments are directed to the council. Mrs. Shifflett stated that she has lived in Elkton sixty-five years and the town is going backwards. Mrs. Shifflett stated that when she was a young girl the town offered all kinds of activities and now we have nothing. Mrs. Shifflett stated that there is nothing for the young people here. Mrs. Shifflett stated that her major concern is if we hand out all this money to organizations what is going to happen if we have a major breakdown with our water or sewer system. Mrs. Shifflett stated that she feels the town should hold on to the money they have now. Mrs. Shifflett stated that the town should save for a rainy day.

Richard Armstrong

Mr. Armstrong stated if we give $25,000 to the Main Street program then we are buying that deal. Mr. Armstrong stated that if we don't buy that deal we don't get it. Mr. Armstrong stated that buying that deal was the biggest piece of nothing he had ever heard in his life. Mr. Armstrong stated that this is his and the citizens' money and the council is giving it away. Mr. Armstrong stated that if you want Main Street improved pick out one business and give them $25,000 to fix up there building. Mr. Armstrong stated that he read that council was thinking about turning the water system over to another state and that they ought to be ashamed of themselves. Mr. Armstrong stated that council should not increase water and sewer rates. Mr. Armstrong stated that senior citizens could not afford it. Mr. Armstrong stated that he loves this town and the people in it. Mr. Armstrong

stated that the people here are sociable and good neighbors. Mr. Armstrong asked that council search their hearts for the right answer. Mr. Armstrong stated that you are giving away the citizens and that you may lay awake at night if you do give it away. Mr. Armstrong stated that P. E. G. - they want power, have ego and are very, very greedy.

Elaine Austin

Ms. Austin - Rockingham Street. Ms. Austin stated that she has lived here seven years. Ms. Austin stated that most people here are senior citizens on fixed incomes. Ms. Austin stated that these are the people paying the taxes in town. Ms. Austin stated that she was active in EDRC and would like to see things progress. Ms. Austin stated that she does think that EDRC is asking for too much money.

Debbie Gooden

Ms. Gooden stated that she is a resident of town and is also the manager of Rockingham Heritage Bank. Ms. Gooden stated that she would like to see the council approve full funding for EDRC. Ms. Gooden stated that this is not a donation and services are rendered for every dollar spent. Ms. Gooden stated that EDRC is asking the town to support them in a 50/50 partnership. Ms. Gooden stated that EDRC would like to work together with the town. Ms. Gooden stated that all citizens in town pay taxes. Ms. Gooden stated that she was not on a fixed income but we all have budgets to live within. Ms. Gooden asked what would happen to the tax base if businesses weren't here. Ms. Gooden stated that businesses chose Elkton because of the way it is presented. Ms. Gooden stated that the money is used for the betterment of Elkton. Ms. Gooden stated that she would be happy to discuss this with the citizens.

As there were no further comments, the Public Hearing adjourned.

MAYOR: M Lee Dearing
M. Lee Dearing, Mayor

RECORDER: Julia M. Smith
Julia M. Smith, Clerk