



TOWNtalk

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

June 8, 2010

Special Issue

www.townofchapelhill.org

Budget Message to Employees

from Town Manager Roger L. Stancil

Dear Fellow Employees,

The Town Council adopted the 2010-11 budget last night. I want to thank you for the role you play in keeping the Town in healthy financial condition. You do this by your good stewardship of tax dollars and your willingness to do the job in spite of the vacancies that mean you have fewer people to help. The result is our ability to absorb huge increases in the cost of the employee pension plan (Local Government Employee Retirement System) and healthcare for employees.

During the process of developing the budget, I received input from many employees, including members of the employee task force on health insurance, employees who attended the Council's public hearing on the budget, representatives of the Employee Forum and conversations with individual employees as I moved around the Town. Comments are attached here from the Employee Forum to the Town Council.

I want to share with you the parts of this budget that directly affect you.

No Layoffs and No Furloughs

We are able to maintain the high level of service provided by Town employees by looking out first for the good people who are here. I am pleased that the Town of Chapel Hill has incurred no layoffs and no furloughs throughout this two year recession. Many of our sister towns and cities have not been able to do that.

One-Time Payment

Regular employees, employed on or before June 30, 2010, will receive a one-time lump sum payment of \$800 on Aug. 6, 2010. This amount will be pro-rated for regular part-time employees. This \$800 amount will be paid in one

lump sum and, it will not become part of the employee's base pay. This payment will be subject to usual payroll deductions. The cost to the Town for this one-time salary adjustment for employees will be \$453,204.

Health Insurance Changes

The Town will continue to pay for 100 percent of the healthcare premium for employees, absorbing a 13.9 percent increase. The Town will continue to pay 50 percent of family coverage. Employees with employee-family coverage plans will see a 13.9 percent increase in the amount they pay, which for full-time employees would equate to an increase of between \$29 and \$59 monthly depending upon your plan.

There will continue to be no deductibles. Co-pays for doctor visits will increase (\$10 to \$20 for regular doctor visits; \$20 to \$40 for specialists, \$20 to \$40 for urgent care, and \$100 to \$150 for emergency room). Co-pays for drugs will remain the same.

Family coverage premium increase will be reflected in the August paychecks. Changes in co-pays will be effective Sept. 1. Detailed information about rate changes will be sent to all employees.

Employee Health Center and Wellness

Although plans are not yet finalized, we continue to work with UNC Hospitals on plans to create an employee health care facility. This service will provide more personal attention to employee health concerns and support our efforts to reduce claims, with the goal of reducing the increases in healthcare premiums. This program will enhance our employee wellness and safety programs.

Speech given by Lee Sparrow at Budget Public Hearing on May 19

My name is Lee Sparrow, and I come to you tonight not only as an employee with the Town of Chapel Hill, but also as a citizen and taxpayer.

I have been a police officer for the past 28 years, starting in 1982, and then joining the Chapel Hill Police Department in 1984.

I have lived in Chapel Hill all my life. My father and his family were born and raised here.

I grew up in the community, went to public school here, and after moving out from my parents, enjoyed apartment life in the area. After the passing of my mother and father in 2002 and 2003, I inherited the home I grew up in, located no more than a mile from here.

After several months of being a Chapel Hill homeowner, I received my first property tax notice. I opened the envelope, and began to read the amount I owed in the top corner.

When I regained consciousness, I vowed that I was going to find something wrong with my Town services. I was going to find something to complain about, and someone was going to hear my cry!

I tried and tried to find something to complain about. However, after several months of trying, I could not. I just couldn't find anything wrong.

From street maintenance to leaf collection. From transit to public works. From Fire department to Police department, I found nothing to complain about. The bottom line... I was getting what I paid for, and more.

In December of 2009 through January 2010 a survey was conducted by ETC Institute in effort to assess citizen satisfaction with the quality of town services. Overall 90 percent of residents surveyed

indicated that they were satisfied with the quality of life in Chapel Hill. As a resident too, I agree.

Tonight I come to you as an employee. I am here representing an Employee Forum. Those members represent all Town employees as a whole.

We all realize that this nation is facing tough economic times. Money is tight, and so are the availability of jobs. More important is retaining those jobs.



We realize that Chapel Hill is not immune to these tough times.

Federal, state and local budgets are stressed and are facing cutbacks. We know, for you as a Town Council, how complex and difficult it is to balance the services of the community with the needs of the employees who provide those services.

We understand the complicated task of balancing a budget. We are grateful for what you do and those before you have done for us as employees. The benefits we have attained from medical insurance, to 401Ks to longevity checks are appreciated and cherished by each one of us.

We are not here tonight with demands or ultimatums. We are not here to ask for a one-time bonus, or increase in hourly wage. We are not here to insist or stipulate. We're not asking to "crunch the numbers" or come up with a figure. We are only asking that you consider in the upcoming budget some type of monetary help. I

and the other members of the Forum would not be doing what we were elected to do by our fellow employees if we didn't at least ask. From the rising cost of fuel to food, daycare to college tuitions, and of course the pending rise of healthcare. The effects are felt by everyone. We wanted you to know tonight that whatever you may approve or propose we would appreciate. Anything will help. We are not asking for a "handout," just a hand up.

No matter what the outcome, we will continue to do what we've always done in the past, and that is provide the highest quality of service to the citizens of Chapel Hill. We will continue to strive to be the best we can, at what we do.

I conclude with this story about my Dad.

My father was a diehard Republican. He considered himself a "Rightwing Conservative." His heroes were George Patton, Colin Powell and Oliver North. He listened to "talk radio." His favorite celebrities were Rush Limbaugh and Charlton Heston. With that in mind, I asked him one time; "Dad, what the heck are we doing in Chapel Hill"? His solemn reply was "Because this place is the best, and I wanted the best for you."

I think I speak for everyone when I say this. The bottom line is that we want the best for our families too.

On behalf of the Employee Forum and all Town employees, we want to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing us to speak tonight.

We especially want to thank Town Manager Roger Stancil for being so gracious with the time he takes to attend our Forum meetings, and listening to our requests and concerns. We thank him for his support, and we as a Forum will continue to give him our support. We appreciate what he strives to do for us and for the citizens of Chapel Hill.

Tonight has been a privilege and an honor.

— Lee Sparrow, Police Investigator
and Employee Forum Member



TOWNtalk is produced by the Communications and Public Affairs Department
Editorial/Graphics: Catherine Lazorko,
Melanie Miller

TOWNtalk, a publication for and about Town of Chapel Hill employees, is issued monthly September through June.
It is printed on recycled paper.
Please recycle with white paper.



Published by:
Town of Chapel Hill
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org or (919) 968-2743