

**Council rejects grant for deputy
Walkertown would have had to pay more than expected**

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WALKERTOWN

The Walkertown Town Council approved the town's 2007-08 budget last week, but declined to participate in a grant that would be paid for a town deputy.

The \$1.5 million budget, which the council passed unanimously, came after a public hearing in which no one spoke about it. The budget leaves the property-tax rate unchanged at 20 cents for every \$100 of value. Property taxes will make up about half the town's revenue.

In related business, the council voted 3-1 against participating in the grant program that would provide state money to pay for a deputy's position in Walkertown. Council Member Sarah Welch voted to apply for the grant.

The council's decision against having a town deputy reversed its action of March 2006. The council then approved applying for the grant. At that time, it looked as though the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office. It would have provided \$23,000 for the deputy's salary and 75 percent of the equipment costs during its first year.

But because the money has not become available until this summer, the town would get only a few months of free deputy services. The federal fiscal year begins in October.

After October, the town would pay 25 percent of the deputy's salary and 50 percent of equipment costs. It would pay 50 percent of the salary and 75 percent of equipment costs the next year and 100 percent after that.

Council Member Brenda Mabe said last week that the startup costs were too high, given that the town would get "a couple months" of the grant's highest level of payment.

Mayor Doc Davis echoed Mabe's remarks.

"The council feels hornswoogled because council thought that we were getting a year, and we are only getting a few months," Davis said.

The sheriff's office has asked the town to pay for the position until 2015. Sgt. Clifton Kilby of the sheriff's office said that it would be hard to recruit anyone for the job if there was a good chance that it would disappear when the grant money ran out.

Council Member Wayne Hester suggested waiting and deciding the issue later, but Kilby said he needed an answer because time would need time to buy equipment for the deputy.

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